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The adventures of Ipomedon as he travelled from court to court in search of love and fame proved to be one of the best-liked stories to be written in English in the Middle Ages. Although the romance does not survive in as many copies as, for example, those of Bevis of Hampton or Guy of Warwick, [1] it is extant in three stylistically distinct versions, each of which is an independent redaction of the Anglo-Norman work by Hue de Rotelande, written in the late twelfth century, probably for Gilbert Fitzbaderon, lord of Monmouth. [2] In so far as critics have attempted to account for the appeal of the tale their explanations have, almost without exception, been coloured by consideration of the style of the individual text under discussion. Thus, for example, the early fifteenth-century Ipomydon B, written in couplets and greatly condensed and simplified from the original, has usually been characterised as a 'popular' adaptation of Hue's work, with 'popular' here denoting the accessibility of the romance, in both style and meaning, to the widest possible audience. [3] Indeed, this version, and the prose Ipomedon C, dating from the mid-fifteenth century, have been taken together to reflect a divergence in English romance composition in the late Middle Ages supposedly caused by the differing demands of listening and reading audiences. [4] In these terms Ipomydon B represents a movement towards an increasingly 'popular' form of romance, in verse, marked by a debasement of both narrative conception and execution, while Ipomedon C corresponds with a taste for a more 'courtly' variety, usually in prose, and designed for private rather than public consumption. [5] Add to this the fact that the earliest version, the late-fourteenth-century tail-rhyme Ipomadon A is a reasonably faithful, and sophisticated, reworking of Hue's poem, destined, it is assumed, for an audience of similar literary discrimination to that for the prose dérimage, and we appear to have the ideal material in this one romance with which to plot a chart of the development of the genre as a whole in England. [6] The assumption that there is a direct correlation between the style, content and audience of a given work has tended to govern literary/historical approaches to the study of romance, but it is the intention in this article to test the validity of any such assumption, by means of a detailed examination of the manuscripts of all three versions of Ipomedon, [7] and of the evidence they offer as to contemporary readership of, and attitudes towards, the story.

The first point to emerge from this exercise is that although the proposed dates of composition are so various, all three surviving MSS of the romance are roughly contemporary in date. Ipomadon A is found in Chetham MS Mun. A.6.31 (8009) and a terminus a quo for the MS as it now stands is indicated by the inclusion of an account of a meeting which took place between Charles the Bold of Burgundy and the Emperor Frederick III outside Trier, in

* See Notes, p. 158

October 1473. The evidence provided by paper-stocks would support a date somewhere in the last quarter of the century for the bulk of the MS.[8] Ipomydon B occurs in Harley MS 2252 in a copy which analysis of palaeographical features and watermarks assigns to the decades between 1460 and 1480.[9] Estimates as to the date of Longleat 257, containing Ipomedon C, have varied widely, from 1400-1450, to 1450-1470;[10] the MS is on vellum rather than paper and so offers no evidence on the issue beyond that afforded by the scribes' hands and the decorative techniques employed. The matter of decoration will be considered more fully in due course, but the characteristics displayed in the anglicana book hands of the two scribes involved in the copying would not be out of keeping with a date in the third quarter of the century,[11] while the existence of the volume before 1483 is attested to by an inscription of ownership, as will be seen. Any notion of a neat chronological evolution reflecting changing style and taste is further distorted by two more pieces of information: firstly, that Ipomydon B was bound up, together with another romance produced in the same workshop, the stanzaic Morte Arthur, in the commonplace book of a London mercer in the third decade of the sixteenth century; and secondly, that this MS provided the copy for Wynkyn de Worde's edition of The Lyfe of Ipomydon, c.1522.[12] A preliminary observation, therefore, might well be that although certain stylistic trends in the composition of romance can be traced in the late medieval period, these trends do not necessarily correspond closely with movements in taste: widespread acceptance of a new fashion may, after all, considerably post-date its introduction.[13] Further detail on the owners of the MSS may help to clarify the point.

To begin with, it would seem that the readers/owners of the A and B versions of Ipomedon were drawn from the same class. Ipomydon B was acquired by John Colyns, a citizen and mercer of London, in or before 1517, as he notes at the end of the Morte (Pl.1). It has been possible to build up a fairly detailed picture of his life.[14] He was admitted to the Mercers' Company by apprenticeship in 1492 and he appears as a witness to various proceedings over the following years, and in 1516 he competed, unsuccessfully, for the office of Clerk of the Mercery.[15] A later record from the Acts of Court of the Company proves that, by 1520 at least, Colyns was trading as a bookseller, specialising in printed books. From other sources, ranging from memoranda in his MS to the printed calendars of state documents, it is possible to gain some idea of the milieu in which he moved, and the kind of people with whom he associated, from fellow merchants and members of the book trade, to individuals connected in some capacity with the royal court. It is clear both from this documentary material and from some of the contents of his MS, such as copies of Skelton's more seditious poems, that Colyns had access to the work of some of the most influential of his contemporaries, as well as to older literary texts, and this places his ownership of the MS of Ipomydon B, and his patronage of de Worde's press for its publication, in a different

perspective. In the eyes of a bookseller who was both collector and entrepreneur, the style of the romance was evidently not seen as a potential hindrance to the popularity of the work with a reading public.

While there is no comparably precise evidence concerning the original ownership of the Chetham MS, it is possible to gain an approximate idea of the circles in which it was being read a short time after it was put together. On dialectal grounds a North-eastern provenance has been suggested for Ipomadon A,[16] but a metropolitan ownership for the volume as a whole is indicated by the inclusion, perhaps in the early sixteenth century, of a copy of an Annals of London (an historical account of civic events based on the mayoral lists).[17] Copies of Annals are frequently found in MSS of the period with a known London provenance (John Colyns, for instance, copied a set into his commonplace book)[18] and it is unlikely that anyone outside the area would be either sufficiently interested in, or well-enough informed about, the municipal affairs of the capital to document them to this extent. It can also be deduced, with a fair degree of probability, that the owner of Chetham was a citizen of London, if not actually a merchant, since such records came into existence as an expression of the specific concerns of the urban middle classes. This particular set of Annals, regrettably, is not very informative, since it finishes after the second year of Henry III's reign, long before any details drawn from memory or reflecting personal interest on the part of the copyist could have been included.[19] The mere presence of such an item in Chetham, however, gives adequate grounds for deciding on the whereabouts of the MS during a set period and in consequence it is justifiable to conclude that two versions of the same romance - one, to a modern critical judgement, far more sophisticated than the other - were being read at around the same time, almost certainly in the same city, and probably by members of the same class.[20]

By way of contrast, Longleat 257 commanded a rather different audience. On 6 July 1483 Richard of Gloucester was crowned King of England. At some date before he assumed the throne, he signed his name, together with his motto, 'tant le desieree', on f.98v in Longleat 257, the ninth leaf of Ipomedon C (Pl.2).[21] The questions of how and when Richard acquired the MS, and even of whether or not he owned it in its present entirety, have not been resolved satisfactorily. To deal with the latter point first, as already observed the MS is the work of two scribes; the volume falls into two, originally independent sections,[22] each scribe being responsible for one of these. The first contains Lydgate's Siege of Thebes, Chaucer's Knight's Tale and Clerk's Tale (described here simply as 'Arcite and Palamon' and 'Grisild'), and Ipomedon C; the second consists of verse paraphrases of books from the Old Testament.[23] Flyleaves, and pages left blank at the end of the last gathering of Ipomedon, have been filled with miscellaneous pieces and jottings, mostly in medieval hands; on ff.109r-109v, for instance, after

the romance, are copied Rules of Conduct for a Gentleman Usher and on f.212v there are Latin notes on the number of towns in England and 'A medicine for the Axes'.[24] Although the two parts of the MS were produced separately, they were decorated together in the same shop; ideas as to when the volume assumed its present dimensions are therefore dependent in large part on the date which is attributed to the painted decoration, but this has never received adequate attention.[25]

The embellishment of the opening page of Ipomedon (Pl.3) is typical of that in the MS and the following description of f.90r may be taken as representative of the artist's work as a whole.[26] A demi-vinet border extends from the initial 'S' which has an infilling of a solidly-coloured, pinnately-lobed leaf design.[27] Acanthus leaves, shaded and modelled to create the illusion of depth, appear in the curve of the 'S'. The bars of the border consist of stems which emerge from the letter-form; that in the upper margin supports rather stiffly-drawn rolled acanthus leaves which terminate in a pseudo-aroid flower. The design of the gutter bar is less restrained, although it contains the same motifs. Penwork 'feathered' sprays extend the frame to the respective edges of the folio. The difficulty over dating arises simply because acanthus leaf border designs were the staple of MS decoration from about the third decade of the fifteenth century onwards.[28] However, Dr Kathleen Scott suggests that the 'heavier form' of the foliage in Longleat would indicate a date after c.1460, while the particular design of the 'S' could well be as late as c.1470.[29] This would give an approximate dating of 1460-1480 for the painted embellishment of Longleat, which agrees with the estimated date of the copying of the texts. It should be emphasised that there are no features of either the scribes' hands, or the decoration, which would suggest that all aspects of production were not coeval. The balance of probabilities is, therefore, that the two sections of the present MS were joined by the time that Richard of Gloucester inscribed his name on f.98v.

Whether or not he commissioned their production is another matter. Manly and Rickert suggested, on the basis of some scribbled names on fly-leaves, that the MS was produced at the Priory of the Austin Canons at Hempton in Norfolk for Anthony Wydville, brother of Richard's sister-in-law, Queen Elizabeth, who was the Priory's patron at the time of his death in 1483.[30] This however can only be supposition; it rests largely on the assumption that the mention of 'h h h h hempton in the Co' on f.107r is a reference to the parish of that name in Norfolk, whereas two others - one in Oxfordshire and one in Gloucestershire - are listed in gazetteers.[31] Dialectal evidence, which might have been expected to suggest an answer, is inconclusive, but does not point to Norfolk as the place of origin of the scribes.[32] Manly and Rickert also draw attention to the names 'Thomas' and 'Elizabeth'

which appear among pen-trials on f.108r and note that Anthony Wydville's first wife was Elizabeth Scales and that her brother's name was Thomas; they add that in his will, made some years after Elizabeth's death, Wydville 'refers with special devotion' to the Scales family.[33] In the absence of any more substantial evidence the point remains a tenuous one. It could also be objected that the theory which states that Longleat passed to Richard from Wydville assumes a degree of friendship between them which is not altogether borne out by the historical record of Richard's enmity towards the Wydville faction at his brother's court; his hostility culminated in the execution of Anthony during the power struggle for the throne.[34] There was, however, one period during which the two men were more closely associated, and this was from October 1470 to March 1471, the occasion of Edward IV's exile in the Lowlands. At this time the temporarily dispossessed king had as his companions Lord Hastings, his brother Richard, and his brother-in-law, Anthony Wydville. The four were entertained by Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de Gruthuyse; the influence of Louis upon the artistic and literary tastes of both Edward and Hastings is well known and Wydville, too, is reputed to have been a lover of books[35] - it is perhaps not too far-fetched to imagine that conditions in Flanders may have been such as to encourage some form of literary exchange between the latter and the king's brother.[36] Whatever the truth, the issue of whether Wydville and Richard both owned the MS seems unlikely to be capable of proof either way.[37]

In the context of the present argument, Richard's ownership of Ipomedon C could be seen as justification for the premise that M.E. prose romances enjoyed a higher literary status, and a socially more elevated readership, in the fifteenth century than did verse romance. The temptation to extrapolate from this one example, and conclude that prose romance in general was the natural province of the nobility (or at least the landed armigerous classes) should, however, be resisted. For every one MS which can be cited in support of the idea, another can be called to contradict it. Thus, while the prose King Ponthus of Galicia is extant in Digby 185, a mid-fifteenth-century MS made for members of the Hopton family of Swillington in Yorkshire (perhaps specifically for Sir William Hopton, Treasurer to Edward IV and Richard III),[38] the unique text of the prose Alexander is found in Robert Thornton's Lincoln collection, and Thornton was a tax collector, minor landowner, and member of the gentry.[39] Conversely, a fragment of an alliterative verse Alexander was copied - probably around 1400 - into the exquisite early fourteenth-century Bodleian MS of the French Alexander romances, which was acquired by Richard Wydville, 1st Earl Rivers, in 1466, and which may have passed subsequently to his son, Anthony.[40] Evidence of the equivalence of the audience for prose and verse romances is also forthcoming for a later period, that of John Colyns's lifetime. A hitherto unpublished list of books in the possession of Edward, Duke of Buckingham, mentions romances written in both media.[41] Buckingham was perhaps the foremost courtier of Henry VIII

(he was at any rate executed for his presumption in 1521) but in addition to owning the modern prestigious prose translations of Valentine and Orson and Oliver of Castille, and a copy of the new prose adaptation of the well-known William of Palerne, he also had de Worde's 1509 edition of the early fourteenth-century verse romance of Richard Coeur de Lion.[42] Buckingham's ownership of this last-named text, and the examples cited above, should caution against generalising on the prospective readership of Colyns's and de Worde's edition of Ipomydon. They make it clear that literary taste, as it may be defined from the available evidence, does not fit easily into neat, preconceived patterns.

A factor which is likely to prove more decisive than literary form in the assessment of 'taste' in relation to the audience for romance is the quality of the MSS and books in which texts circulated. Again, each case should be judged on its own terms because there are exceptions, but in general it seems fair (if obvious) to say that the more lavish the production the greater the financial resources of the buyer may prove to be, and hence (perhaps) the higher his or her social position.[43] The point may be demonstrated by a comparison of the three copies of Ipomedon. Longleat 257 is a MS of superior quality to both Harley and Chetham, even though it is by no means a de luxe volume. It is composed of vellum, not paper, and shows signs of more careful preparation, as well as copying. Unlike the other two MSS where, for example, only the writing space is framed on each page, here individual lines are ruled. The text itself is attractively presented, with the initial letter of the first word of each sentence, along with many of the names of people and places, picked out in red and blue alternately, while more important textual divisions (marked as paragraphs in Kölbing's edition) are marked with two line lombards, with scrollwork infilling, in the same colours (Pl.2). An additional form of embellishment is the brown and green brushwork found in many of the lower margins; on occasions this forms a scroll which frames the catchword (e.g. f.48r). In spite of this attention to detail the quality of the painted decoration is not high; as already noted, the foliage is clumsily drawn and the combination of colours used, although typical of late medieval manuscript painting, lacks subtlety in application.[44] The employment of ochre rather than gold suggests the work of a provincial, not a metropolitan, shop.[45] The overall impression created is of a book which, while pleasant to look at, was designed to be used. By comparison Chetham, and more especially, Harley, appear relatively plain, workman-like productions (Pls.4, 5). Space was left in Harley for rubrication but this was never carried out (the guide-letters are still visible). The number of lines left for the rubricator, varying between two and three, indicate that the planned decoration could only ever have been on a modest scale. Chetham presents an initially slightly more impressive appearance, due to the elaborate treatment accorded the incipit; but this is somewhat ruined by the comical drawing in

the rubrication of the letter 'O' and by the scribe's ineptitude in copying out the hero's name wrongly in the heading. The scribe responsible for the incipit can, in all probability, be distinguished from the copyist of the text on general stylistic grounds; the latter writes with confidence, revealing a fair degree of competence: like the scribe of Ipomedon C, he elaborates the first letters of many pages with strapwork flourishes.[46] As in Longleat running titles are provided for the text of Ipomadon. Chetham therefore shows a higher degree of finish than Harley - although 'finish' cannot necessarily be equated with polish.[47]

A point arising from consideration of the physical characteristics of these MSS which is worth stressing is that, despite the compositional and stylistic differences between the verse and prose versions of Ipomedon, there is no evidence in the books themselves to suggest that any of the extant copies were designed for public rather than private reading. Literary critics have, in the past, made much of the so-called 'minstrel's tags' in Ipomydon B, and also of the romance's brevity, and the way in which the narrative has been stressed at the expense of motivation in order, it is assumed, to render it suitable for a 'live' performance.[48] A recent critic of the Chetham Ipomadon has similarly talked of its derivation from the 'minstrel school' of composition and commented on its suitability for recitation.[49] In stylistic terms Longleat, by comparison, appears well adapted to the needs of the private voice of the solitary reader, with all inappropriate references to the act of recitation excised.[50] It may well be - and this is not the point of contention - that the A and B versions were written with oral performance in mind, but the MSS in which they circulated in the late Middle Ages were quite clearly designed as reading texts. The audience for these versions was drawn, as has been demonstrated, from the middle classes, and what is known of the extent and nature of the literacy of members of this section of society is consistent with this interpretation. Changes in methods of production of books and in the economic status of the middle classes during this period all contributed to the spread of what Malcolm Parkes has called 'non-pragmatic' literacy,[51] evidence for which can be found both in references to books in wills and inventories, and in manuscripts assembled by 'amateur' scribes such as Robert Thornton and John Colyns, presumably for their own, and their families', consumption. The natural conclusion to draw from the contents of such volumes, which often cover a wide variety of subjects from literature to legal matters, and historical materials to medical recipes, is that they were used both for reference purposes and for browsing through in leisure moments. With regard to the physical nature of fifteenth-century manuscripts compiled by both amateurs and professionals, Pamela de Wit has shown that visual elements - whether drawings, abstract designs, or the lay-out of the actual texts - were of considerable importance in the reading experience.[52] This is not to say that certain texts, including the romances which are often found in collections like these, would

not have been read aloud within a small social group by the end of the fifteenth century, but the evidence for this practice comes (perhaps not surprisingly) from the better-documented upper classes, from which the audience of the prose Ipomedon was drawn; reading aloud seems to have been considered an important part of the educative process, for example, as Edward IV's provisions for the instruction of his eldest son make clear.[53] One final point may be made. Whilst the printing of Ipomydon B, as opposed to A or C, must be seen as historical 'accident' in the sense that this version came presumably by chance into the hands of a man who saw, and was in a position to exploit, its market potential, its publication twice within ten years does indicate that the enjoyment of older romances on the part of an expanding and undeniably literate buying public was not constrained by the features of what might be thought of as an inappropriate or archaic style. The assumption that style both derives from, and in turn reflects, function - in this sense the requirements of a particular mode of transmission - has been pervasive in romance criticism, but this can be misleading when we attempt to understand the appeal of the genre to its contemporary audience.

Where exactly with regard to Ipomedon this appeal lay can best be understood by looking at each version of the romance in relation to the other contents of the collection in which it occurs; apart from the comparatively rare survival of contemporary annotations, analysis of manuscript context provides the literary historian with the only tools with which to reconstruct the attitudes of an audience towards a given work.[54] The essential first step in this process is to determine the integrity of each volume in the age in which it was produced. Having done this it should be possible to assess the extent to which the choice of contents was deliberate and hence the degree to which each MS reveals particular thematic interests on the part of the owner/reader.

The make-up of Chetham is relatively complicated. It contains only fourteen items altogether, but these are the work of possibly as many as eleven scribes. On the evidence of scribes' hands, decorative techniques, paper-stocks and signs of wear at the extremities of certain gatherings, it seems that the MS is composed of several booklets,[55] many of which are apparently the product of the same workshop. The structure of the MS can be explained most clearly in tabular form.[56]

Item		Folios	Scribe	Watermark
1.	Life of St Dorothy prose	1r-2r	I	None
2.	'Assvmpcio sancte marie' verse, IMEV 2165	3r-17v	II, III	a
3.	'lyff of seynt Anne' verse, IMEV 2332	18r-29v	IV	b
4.	'lyf of seynt katerin' prose	30r-47v	V	c
5.	'liber Catonis' (Benedict Burgh) verse, IMEV 3955	48r-75r	VI	d
6.	'Torrente of Portyngale' verse, IMEV 983	76r-119v	VII, V	b, c
7.	A Lamentation of Our Lady verse, IMEV 2619	119r-121r	V	c
8.	'A prayar of Oure Lady' verse IMEV 2119	121r-121v	V	None
9.	'Bevys of Hampton' verse, IMEV 1993	122r-190v	V	c, e
10.	'Ipomadon' verse, IMEV 2635	191r-335r	V	f, c
	Title-page to 'kervyng and nortur'	336		c
11.	John Russell, 'A good boke of kervyng and nortur' verse, IMEV 1514	337r-355r	VIII	c
	Blank leaf	356		g
12.	The Book of the Duke and the Emperor prose	357r-366v	V	h
13.	Annals of London	367v-368v	IX, X	f.367, h; ff. 368, 369, none (but of different quality)
14.	Ballad of a tyrannical husband verse, IMEV 1751	370r-372r (unfinished)	XI	i

The booklet construction is indicated firstly by the worn appearance of ff.1r; 2v,3r; 17v,18r; 29v,30r; 47v,48r; 75v,76r; 121v-122r; 190v,191r; and 369v, 370-372; and secondly, by the remnants of signatures. The majority of these have been lost through cropping but in Ipomadon signatures running from 'd' to 'l' are found from the beginning of the fourth gathering (f.233r) onwards. Within each quire the first seven leaves are numbered individually, and consecutively from those in the previous gatherings; hence gathering 8 ('H') has the numbers xlviij-liiij on ff.284r-290r, and gathering 9 ('I'), lv-lxi on ff. 298r-304r.[57] Items 7 and 8 were obviously copied as 'fillers' following on from Torrent. The scribe responsible for the bulk of the work in the MS as it now stands was no.V[58] and it seems clear that the booklets containing items 4, 6-8, 9, 10 and 12 were produced by the same shop. However, on the basis of the decorative style of the incipits, and the recurrence of certain watermarks throughout various gatherings, it is possible to attribute two further pieces to this shop, namely, no.3, the 'lyff of seynt Anne' and No.11, John Russell's treatise (see Pls.4, 6-8 for illustration of the headings to various of these texts).[59]

What seems to have happened, therefore, is this: at some point, probably during the last two decades of the fifteenth century, a customer chose a selection of booklets from one shop. The endleaves of some of these booklets are rubbed, so are likely to have been lying around either before or after purchase, while the conjoint leaves of Ipomadon, John Russell's treatise and the Book of the Duke and the Emperor are fairly clean, so these three texts may have been kept together from soon after they were copied. At some date the owner apparently added to his collection and interspersed the more devotional and exemplary texts with others of a similar kind, namely, nos. 1 and 2, being saints' lives; and no.5, the 'liber Catonis'; the end-leaves of these texts, like those of some of their companion-pieces, are well worn, so their addition to the volume could have occurred some time after they were copied, or sold. However, the lack of wear at the end of the gathering containing the Book of the Duke and the Emperor and on the first of the two following leaves (which, although they do not bear any mark, are clearly from a different stock) suggests that the latter were added soon after the former was acquired by an owner - perhaps with the immediate purpose of copying the Annals. Finally, the three leaves which contain the ballad of a tyrannical husband were added; these show considerable signs of wear (as does the last page of the Annals) so probably formed part of a stock of loose leaves of paper which the copyist happened to have lying around. It seems clear, then, that there was deliberate organisation of the available material.

This is confirmed by looking at the contents more closely, for it is possible to perceive more subtle gradations of theme in the collection than are at first apparent. The 'liber Catonis' of Benedict Burgh, for example, seems

to have been inserted between the group of saints' lives and the block of romances as a kind of bridging work, didactic in tone, but providing a transition between the exclusively devotional and the more secular works. Even within this latter block of romances, though, there is a gradual shift in tone from the pious to the 'courtly'.[60] Torrent, for instance, loosely structured and repetitive as it is, owes what thematic unity it can boast of to notions of simple piety and Providential intervention in the lives of its hero and heroine.[61] The generic affiliations of this romance are with legends of the Eustace-Isumbras type, and the two prayers which occur as 'fillers' in the Torrent booklet are quite in accordance with the predominant tone of the work. In Bevis, elements of popular piety are again characteristic and Bevis's adventures as a crusader hero of course form the basis of the narrative; but, as Judith Weiss has recently argued, there are several interpolations in the M.E. adaptations of the Anglo-Norman original which, with their explicit Christian content, emphasise the religious didacticism of the story.[62] On the basis of these observations it seems perfectly reasonable to say that these two romances are the secular equivalent of the saints' lives with which the MS opens. With the romance of Ipomadon, however, the transition from the religious to the worldly is complete. Ipomadon may make customary obeisance to the tenets of Christianity and he may, like Torrent, be intended to be an exemplary hero, but his projected sphere of influence is no longer that of conventional knightly piety: rather, it is the 'courtliness' of his conduct in relation to the attainment of his love which is to be the object of emulation.[63] The text which follows the romance, John Russell's courtesy tract, is more literally 'courtly' in that it was written by a man who claimed to have been 'vsshere' to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (d.1447).[64] The piece which follows this, and concludes the professionally-produced body of the MS, like Russell's treatise, shows an intimate acquaintance with the workings of a royal court. This account of the celebrated meeting between Charles the Bold and the Emperor Frederick has not hitherto been described correctly, and it is interesting for its illustration of the social niceties of diplomatic negotiations.[65] The tone is propagandist and the writer expends much time on descriptions of costume, furnishings, behaviour and chivalric tourneying. Displays of good breeding were seen as being of equal importance with the material manifestations of the wealth and cultural superiority of Burgundy, and in this 'chronicle' letter all these factors are welded together to create an impressive analogy between the political might of the state and the personal glory of its ruler, Duke Charles. As historians have noted, the court of Burgundy during its heyday in the fifteenth century was the accepted 'mirror' by which other societies could judge themselves.[66] The ostensible differences in the circumstances surrounding the composition of the 'boke of kervyng and nortur' and the Book of the Duke and the Emperor cannot conceal the fact that the two texts are fitting companion-pieces, the latter bearing witness to the political efficacy of the behaviour advocated in John Russell's treatise, in which he

attempted to teach young men to 'know þe Curteisie of the court' (l.174).

Turning to Harley 2252, the question of the extent to which it was planned is more easily, though not necessarily more satisfactorily, answered. Colyns obtained his two romances together, forty years or more after they had been copied, and then proceeded to assemble a book around them. The process of compilation probably lasted about fifteen years: Colyns died in 1540 and a terminus a quo is suggested by the fact that Ipomydon was lent to de Worde's print-shop around 1522, before being bound up in the larger volume. The imprint of Colyns's personality is an inherent feature of this MS although, since it is a commonplace book, its contents are by definition more eclectic than those of the other types of book with which we are concerned here. [67]

Longleat 257 is, again, a different matter. The MS falls into two parts, as has been seen, and it is the first which primarily concerns us in the present discussion. The volume is one of the best examples of a romance collection where there is a clear principle of organisation underlying the choice of texts. On the level of narrative alone, there are strong links between the works. The Thebes, for instance, was inspired by Chaucer's Knight's Tale and the monk of Bury, as well as quoting directly from the work of his poetic mentor, adopted and expanded his framework of the Canterbury pilgrimage. [68] The positioning of the Thebes before the Knight's Tale emphasises the sequential nature of the events which are portrayed by the two writers and, as we shall see, establishes a 'historical' dimension for the contents of the MS as a whole. The romance of Ipomedon is in turn directly related to these two texts: the classical story of the siege of Thebes was an important source of inspiration for Hue de Rotelande [69] and Ipomedon himself was known as one of the 'Seven against Thebes'; as such, his death is described in Lydgate's poem (ll.4244-49), while in the Knight's Tale it is the widow of Ipomedon's step-brother, Campaneus, who pleads with Theseus to avenge the deaths of her, and her companions', husbands and secure the return of their bodies (ll.893-951). [70] It is not, however, immediately so clear why the Clerk's Tale should have been included after the Knight's Tale, since its generic affiliations, unlike those of the other texts in the MS, would seem to be with the saint's life, [71] and there does not appear to have been any manuscript tradition whereby the two tales were associated in the Middle Ages. [72] On one level the Clerk's Tale is a religious allegory - the Clerk at one point is quite explicit in connecting Grisilde with Job (ll.932-38) and in this respect Walter becomes an agent of divine trial; but on another level thematic interest lies in the discussion of practical morality and the 'vertuous suffraunce' (l.1162) which it is desirable to cultivate in this world. The Clerk's injunction to 'Receyven al in gre that God us sent' (l.1151) is thus directly comparable with Theseus's advice to 'maken vertu of necessitee' (l.3042) and accommodate to the divine plan; in both tales the narrative is

placed within the perspective of the uncertain and transitory nature of life.[73] Aside from this, however, some stress is laid upon both the virtues and shortcomings of Walter as a ruler, and on the excellence with which Grisilde fulfils her role in society as Walter's wife,[74] and it would appear that it is in this respect that thematic connections are strongest between the Clerk's Tale and the other contents of Longleat, for the interest in these texts resides principally in illustrating and commenting upon the esoteric concerns of a ruling class.

The Knight's Tale is, arguably, the finest literary statement of the philosophical and aesthetic bases of the chivalric ideal, and the concept of good government which both promotes and orders that ideal and which is explored, and to a degree enshrined, in the figure of Theseus[75] is taken up by Lydgate as the keystone to his interpretation of Theban history. Writing in 1421, the year after the Treaty of Troyes, Lydgate's 'message' was one of belief in the possibility of 'Pees and quyet, concord and unyte' (l.4703) and throughout the Thebes he points in exemplary fashion to rules for the conduct of government in a way which combines political pragmatism with moral idealism, and much of this advice is directed, presumably through the person of his one-time royal patron, Henry V, to the ruling élite. His purpose in providing 'mirrors' of behaviour for his audience to study was, to quote R.W. Ayers, to teach 'some moral and political lessons by reference to what he regarded as ancient historical example'[76] and by this token the didacticism supports the proposition that 'history' is a revelation of moral truth, rather than an accurate record of events.[77] This idea links with the Clerk's Tale where, in his concluding remarks, the narrator refers to the moral degeneracy of the present age, and urges his audience to learn from the story which has just been told (ll.1139-41). A similar principle, I suggest, governed both the re-working of Hue's Ipomédon into the C version, and its inclusion in Longleat. In Hue's poem the basic story of a hero's adventures in the course of his education into the role of king is dressed up in details drawn from contemporary courtly life and decorated with occasionally cynical insights into the nature of his society,[78] but in the M.E. C text the writer has, by omission and reduction, produced a work which, in its concentration on an almost abstract ideal of kingship, becomes, like the Thebes, a timeless 'mirror for princes'.[79] The different way in which the later writer has interpreted the 'sens' of his material becomes evident through a comparison of the opening lines; Hue's leisurely 42-line prologue, in which he discourses on himself and his work, becomes a concise introduction to the genealogy of the ruling houses of Sicily and its neighbouring states:

> Svm tyme there was in the land of Cecile a king, that was called Melliagere, the which was the wysest and the most iuste king, that men knowe euer ouer all in his tyme, and also the grettest conquerour, that myght be, so farforth, that all the lordes aboute him were vndre his suggestion and did him homage. Such honour and grace god sent him, that all his lyve he gouerned his roialme in rest and peace. Bot it happened him so, that in all his live he had noo childe, to be his heire, so that for defaute of isshue of him self the heritage after his decesse fell to a nevew, that he had, that was called Capaneus, the which was a worthie knight and the best beloved man, that might be. Now leyve we the king and speke of a suster, that he had, the which was wedded to the duke of Calabre by assent of hire brother, the which duke of Calabre was homager to that same king Melliager ... (p.323)

The changes effected here are crucial in establishing the points of reference for the audience; the impression that Ipomedon C was intended to be read as historical 'example' is initially conveyed by the fact that it is in prose, the medium of many of the vernacular chroniclers by the fifteenth century. The point of comparison can be demonstrated by looking at the opening lines of the Brut, as found in Rawlinson B.171, of c.1400:

> In the noble lande of Surrye ther was a noble kyng and myghty, & a man of grete renoun, þat one called Dyoclician, þat well and worthily hym gouernede, & rewlede thurgh his noble chiualrye, so þat he conquered alle þe landes abowte hym, so that almoste all þe kynges of þe world to hym were entendaunt. Hyt befell thus, þat this Dioclician spousede a gentyl damysele þat was wondyr fayr, þat was hys Eemys doughter, Labana; & sche loued hym as reson wolde, so þat he gate vpon here xxxiij doughtres, of þe which, þe eldest one called Albyne. And þese Damysels, whan þey comyn into Age, by comen so fayre þat it was wondyr ... [80]

The impersonality in the recording of historical 'fact' which characterises the Brut is equally evident in Ipomedon C and derives in large measure from the matter-of-fact narrative style. In both the romance and the Brut syntactical structure is simple, even elementary, in the use of parataxis; sentences tend to begin with prepositions or conjunctions, and there is little attempt to handle complexities either of thought (in the analysis of motive, for example) or of language. The cumulative effect of this sober recital of facts is to produce an impression of veracity, whereby the role of the author is simply that of the

conveyor of received knowledge.[81] The 'mirror' aspect of the romance is developed through the stress which is placed on the qualities which Ipomedon, as hero, must acquire in order to become worthy of kingship;[82] an obvious example of this is the description of his upbringing:

> (Ipomedon) was the fairest childe and thryftiest, that might be, and had a squiere with him, which was his maistre and had the governance of him, to teche him to rede, to sing, to carol, to daunce, to hunt, to hauke, to iuste, to tournay and all othre maner of vertus, that a man shuld have, so that within a short tyme all men him loved and of him had ioye. (p.326)

While emphasis on his early training and his accomplishments is, as will be seen, an important feature of all the M.E. texts, it is symptomatic of the approach to the story in this version that it is the qualities of diplomacy and wisdom which Ipomedon displays, rather than his military prowess alone, which brings about settlement of the war in France between 'King Arthus' and his brother: 'and so Ipomedon thurgh his witt & his manhod made a fynall peace betwix thes two kinges for euer more'.[83]

Having established the importance of the 'historic' dimension of the first section of Longleat it is worth noting that in the second part also the selection of texts, this time from the Bible, seems to have been made on the basis of their suitability as historical exemplars. The books chosen for translation - Genesis, Kings, Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith and Maccabees - in dealing with the cycle of fortune and misfortune of individuals and dynasties within a religious perspective, are clearly amenable to this interpretation. The intention to instruct is stated explicitly in ll.3-4 of stanza 2 of the work: 'ffor of the bybyll sal yt be / the poyntes that ar mad most in price ...' and the lessons to be learned are pointed up throughout.[84] The potential didactic value of the Biblical stories is strengthened by the attempt to re-cast the text into what was apparently felt to be a more appropriate form for the subject-matter: the stanzas are written out as continuous prose.[85] It would seem, therefore, that the contents of the two sections of Longleat 257 are related more closely to one another in their themes than might at first have been supposed; although their sources of inspiration could hardly have been more different, the texts are complementary and the combination gives further indication of the care with which the volume as a whole was designed and put together. Although, as has been observed, we do not know whether Richard of Gloucester actually commissioned the volume, it is interesting to note that the other books which he is known to have owned are of a kind with Longleat, with its dual emphasis on the values of chivalry and piety. Among the manuscripts in his 'library' were an illuminated copy of Vegetius's treaties, De Re Militari, in the English translation made for Lord Berkeley in 1408 (this is the

only surviving book which it is certain that Richard commissioned); a copy of part of the French prose Tristan; a French Chronicle; 'The Book of Ghostly Grace' or, as it is also known, 'The Visions of St Matilda'; a Book of Hours given to him by his wife, Anne Neville; and also, perhaps, a copy of Aegidius Romanus' De Regimine Principum.[86]

Given that the M.E. adaptations of Ipomédon are to be found in MSS so different both in their contents and in their methods of production - one being an assemblage of originally separate booklets, one a privately-compiled commonplace book, and the other a professionally-produced 'miscellany' - there are nonetheless good grounds for believing that all three versions of the romance were read in a broadly similar way in the late Middle Ages. Looking first at Chetham and Longleat it is immediately noticeable that in both MSS the romance is followed by 'courtesy' material. In Chetham, as has been observed, Ipomadon, the copy of John Russell's kervyng and nortur and the Book of the Duke and the Emperor originated in the same workshop, although Russell's treatise was copied by a different scribe from the other two pieces. All three texts, however, may have been associated together from a very early period because, unlike the other booklets from the same shop, there is little sign of wear on their conjoint leaves; in other words, they may have been envisaged as forming a single unit of complementary material by the owner and kept together before the rest of the MS was assembled. The evident patterning of the volume's contents overall lends weight to the idea that this relationship extended beyond mere physical proximity, and the element that the three works have in common is the theme of behaviour, or 'courtesy'.

The connections between Russell's book and the Book of the Duke and the Emperor in this respect have already been outlined. With regard to Ipomadon it can be established that, while the basic story concerns the ubiquitous romance theme of the testing of the knight to prove his worth before he can fulfil his destined social role and attain his lady, the tale is differentiated from others of a similar kind (such as those of the Fair Unknown group)[87] by the unusual concentration in the early stages of the work on the hero's performance as a page, and by the emphasis which is placed throughout upon the virtues which are embodied within the general concept of 'courtesy'. The term, under its broadest definition, can embrace notions of justice, charity, piety, and generosity to rich and poor alike, as well as those of the more superficial aspects of 'behaviour'. The idea of a progression through a number of roles and corresponding phases of 'education' is integral to both the structure and theme of Ipomadon. In the first section the hero is the 'stravnge valete'; in the second he is, simultaneously, the 'drewlerayne' and the 'worthy knyght, þat had no name', and in the final part he is the fool-knight; only when he has attained the cumulative self-knowledge of each of these roles

can he assume his rightful position as King of Poyle and husband to La Fiere.[88] It is made clear that the foundations of Ipomadon's nobility are laid in his youthful training at his father's court. The poet states that Tholomew, the boy's master, or tutor,

> Fyrste leryd the chylde curtessye,
> And sethe the chasse and chevalrye ...
> He waxed worthely, ware and wyse,
> Of huntynge also he bare the pryce. ll.151-2; 154-5

As a youth Ipomadon 'seruyd in his faders hall' (l.161) where he was 'holden in his dayes / Comely, kynde and curtayes' (ll.158-9) and it is this courtly apprenticeship which gains him entrance to La Fiere's court, when he asks that he might serve her:

> And in her hertt she thought,
> That he myghte wyth grette honoure
> Haue seruyd kynge or emperoure,
> He was so worthy wroughte ... ll.420-23

The behaviour which Ipomadon displays here at his reception immediately raises him, morally, above the members of the Lady's retinue. When he goes with the butler to prepare to serve her, the courtiers mock him for keeping on his mantle, but he confounds their assumed superiority by presenting it as a gift to the butler. This act proves to the Lady that he must be 'comyn of gentille blode' (l.501). Ipomadon has evidently succeeded in teaching those around him a lesson about courtesy; by his demeanour it is as though he has put into practice the following words of advice from John Russell:

> Be fayre of answer redy to serue and also gentelle of chere
> and þan men wille say 'þere gothe a gentille officere'.
> ll.181-2

This is by no means the only episode where, by his model conduct, the hero instructs others on the relationship between courtesy's external forms and its ethical grounding in the principles of generosity and humility,[89] and the verdict on Ipomadon's rule which concludes the poem and in which his virtues are extolled, acts both as epitaph on his status as a romance hero and as a signpost to the exemplary nature of the work:

> He was a fulle noble kyng ...
> Off kyndnes and of curtessye
> Off armvre and of chevalrye ... ll.8855-56

This idea of the thematic connection between the romance and the genre of the courtesy book receives some additional support from Longleat where, on the second folio after Ipomedon C, someone has written out in a current hand of the second half of the fifteenth century, 'The order how A Jentylman hvscher schall scerue hys greet master In doyng the sarwyse ffor the After non' and 'howe And In wat maner A Jentyllman howsshar schalle sarve hys greet master or mestres ther lewery ffor Alle nyt' (see Appendix). The Rules of Conduct, in their brevity and awkwardness of expression, bear the hallmark of having been written down from personal experience,[90] and in this respect they differ markedly from texts such as John Russell's, which was clearly intended from the start for a wide circulation.[91] It has been suggested that the Longleat Rules are in the hand of Richard of Gloucester and that they refer to the time which, it has been supposed, he spent as a page in the household of the Earl of Warwick;[92] a comparison of the palaeographical and dialectal features of this piece with those of samples of Richard's holograph letters strongly suggests, however, that this is not the case.[93] Even if royal authorship of the Rules can be eliminated, they do provide some clues as to the kind of milieu in which the MS circulated when not in the possession of Richard. The household implied is a grand one; the lord who is to be served could be a 'prynsce or master' and the intended beneficiary of the instructions is himself no menial servant: he is himself a gentleman, and he directs the service of others. In sum, the piece could well be a record of part of the courtly education of a young nobleman or a son of a wealthy family of gentry, since the training of such young men often involved a period of service in the household of a neighbour, a relative, or a social superior, as both Edward IV's book of household ordinances and the Paston Letters show.[94] The possibility of there being in the Middle Ages a conscious association between this type of 'courtesy' material and Ipomedon supports the proposition that the contents of the first part of Longleat were designed to work together to provide a 'mirror' of chivalric behaviour for the reader to contemplate.[95]

Turning now to Harley, it might seem that the variety of contents in this MS makes the drawing of conclusions a more hazardous affair. Certainly, while there is some evidence of interest on John Colyns's part in didactic material relating to behaviour (in his inclusion of Lydgate's Dietary and the short courtesy poem The Proverbs of Good Counsell, for example) this is not as marked as in the collection of one of Colyns's contemporaries and fellow merchant, Richard Hill,[96] and the overriding impression which Harley gives is of Colyns' concern to collect items which had some bearing on his life as a citizen of London in the reign of Henry VIII. For all the apparent lack of positive support in MS context for a reading of Ipomydon B along the lines of that proposed for the A and C versions, the story in B does seem to have been re-written with the intention of stressing precisely those elements which formed the basis of this reading, namely, the exemplary

aspects of the hero's upbringing and his subsequent 'courteous' conduct. This is most noticeable in the expansion of certain incidents, in contrast to the overall condensation of the narrative. The description of Ipomydon's youth and his tutelage by Tholomew, for instance, runs to 62 lines in B (ll.20-82) as opposed to 15 in A (ll.147-168). While the episode of his reception at the Calabrian court is not lengthened in the same way it is, proportionately to the overall length of the romance, of some importance; it occupies 75 lines (ll.269-344) which is almost half the length of the episode in A (ll.353-502), but in the latter much of the attention is devoted to describing the reactions of hero and heroine upon their initial sightings of one another. The details which are introduced into these two episodes in B give a fair indication of the author's assessment of his potential audience's interests. Literacy is given some prominence as a worthy attribute and Tholomew employs a 'clerke' to teach 'the child vppon þe boke' (ll.53-4) and this is in fact closer to the sense of the Anglo-Norman than either of the other two texts.[97] Apart from literate skills Ipomydon acquires the more usual courtly ones of being able to ride and hunt, but details here are skimpy (although the Lady later proves Ipomydon's nobility to her own satisfaction by watching him 'vndo' the deer; ll.398-9, 408-10). Primary stress is laid instead on Ipomydon's training in 'norture'. Tholomew, we are told, is 'curteyse' and 'hend of mouthe' and 'Of norture, iwys, myche he couthe' (ll.39-40). And while the clerk is in charge of the hero's more intellectual studies it is Tholomew who supervises his behaviour:

> And after he taught hym other dede,
> Aftirward to serve in halle
> Bothe to grete and smalle,
> Before the kyng mete to kerve,
> Hye and low feyre to serve,
> Both of howndis and haukis game;
> Aftir he taught hym all & same
> In se, in feld, and eke in ryuere ... ll.56-63

These lines are particularly revealing because they make explicit reference to the art of carving of different types of game and fish which courtesy writers such as John Russell took so many pains to describe. The results of all these efforts on Tholomew's part is a young man whose praises are extolled in terms of his demeanour:

> Hende he was, curteyse & fre ...
> All lovyd hym, þat were hym by
> For he bare hym so curtessely ... ll.69, 73-4

As Tholomew tells Ermones as he requests permission for his charge to leave the court:

> Off youre courte and youre norture
> He hathe wele lernyd, I you ensure;
> He wold wend in to strange contre,
> More in service for to bee ... II.193-6

The passage portraying Ipomydon's first meeting with the Lady demonstrates the narrative preoccupations by the repetition of key words within a short space; see for example, the repetition of 'servise' and 'norture' in 11.270-78, where Ipomydon makes his request to the Lady, and II.283-92, describing her response (my underlining):

> And pray you, yff youre wille be,
> That I myght dwelle with you to yere,
> Of your norture for to lere!
> I am come from ferre lond,
> For speche I herde byfore the hand,
> That your norture and your servise
> Ys holden of so grete empryse.
> I pray you, þat I may dwelle here,
> Somme of your seruyse for to lere! II.270-78

> She saw also by his norture,
> He was a man of grete valure.
> She cast full sone in hyr thoght,
> That for no seruyce come he noght,
> But it was worship hyr vnto,
> In feyre seruyce hym to do;
> She sayd, 'syr, welcome ye be
> And all, þat comyn be with the!
> Sithe ye haue had so grete travayle,
> Of a service ye shall not fayle ... II.283-92

The effect of this 'clustering' is obvious and unsubtle, but it gives an unequivocal indication that the author intended special attention to be paid to the virtues of breeding and behaviour invoked.[98]

It would seem then that an important part of the appeal of all the M.E. versions of Ipomedon lay in a didactic emphasis on matters of courtesy: the hero instructs the audience by example. Carrying speculation further, it is possible that this aspect of the romance actually proved especially attractive to audiences in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (the time during which all three MSS were produced and were in circulation) for during this

period courtesy books proliferated and many of them, including John Russell's, were issued by the early printers.[99] It could be argued that the audience for this kind of material was most likely to have been drawn from the 'aspiring' middle classes, eager to educate themselves in the ways of their social betters.[100] Indeed, with the urban middle classes anxious to establish their credentials as 'gentlemen' by acquiring both wealth and land outside the cities, it is an a priori assumption that members of this class would require initiation into different codes of behaviour.[101] But Longleat 257 provides evidence of an upper-class interest in the practical application of the theories propounded in, for example, Edward IV's Liber Niger, and emphasises that the preoccupation with status, or the privilege and service due to status, was not confined to the middle classes, even though the material survivals of noble interest are, by comparison, so rare.[102] The nature of late medieval society was as many historians have asserted essentially, if paradoxically, conservative; it was characterised by a growing desire for permanence in outward forms which developed in direct response to the increasing fluidity of social organisation.[103] Members of the nobility, therefore, had as much of a vested interest in the subject-matter of courtesy as any merchant or country gentleman. In the words of F.R.H. Du Boulay:

> ... the redistribution of wealth called for modes of behaviour to justify the nouveau riche to himself on the one hand, and to assert on the other the immemorial predominance of the lord.[104]

One last example will suffice to confirm that the romance of Ipomedon is not an isolated instance of the interest in behaviour cutting across the potential barriers of class taste. In 1410, Jacques Legrand presented his Livre de Bonne Meurs to Jean, Duc de Berri; in 1487, Caxton printed his own translation of this work, known as The Book of Good Manners, at the request of his friend and fellow mercer, William Pratt, and by the early sixteenth century this was a text in 'popular' demand, as its five re-printings within the next forty years show.[105] Yet, over a hundred years after its aristocratic beginnings, a copy of one of the printed editions still formed part of a nobleman's collection - 'Good manners' was among the volumes owned by Edward, Duke of Buckingham.[106]

What conclusions, then, can be drawn from this study of the manuscripts of Ipomedon? The most important one in respect of romance studies in general is that the popularity of individual texts can be seen to have depended on more complicated factors than a literary appreciation based largely on their style might suggest. It is salutary in this regard to remember that the accomplished A version of Ipomadon was, in the Middle Ages, being read alongside not only the gloriously simplistic and brutal (albeit pious) Bevis of Hampton, but also Torrent of Portyngale which, in terms of a modern aesthetic,

has to be considered one of the worst romances ever written, being excessively derivative in plot and inept in execution.[107] With reference to Ipomedon itself it would seem that in spite of the varying natures of the MSS in which the different versions survive, there are solid grounds for asserting that all three offered similar satisfactions to their readers. The appeal of the work seems to have come from the amenability of the story to adaptation as the nature of society - and literary audiences - changed. Thus the Anglo-Norman Ipomédon proved, in all its English translations, to cater for the demands of a widening public without losing its essential character. From illustrating the narrow chivalric concerns of an aristocratic audience in the twelfth century, the romance became broadly accessible, providing a 'mirror' of behaviour for merchants such as John Colyns, and other members of an increasingly literate middle class, as well as for princes.[108]

CAROL M. MEALE,
CENTRE FOR MEDIEVAL STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF YORK.

NOTES

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1. Bevis is extant in 7 MSS and Guy in 5; both texts were printed three times during the first half of the sixteenth century. See J. Burke Severs, ed., A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500 1, Newhaven, Connecticut 1967, 215, 217-18.

2. Hue states in his other romance, Prothesilaus, that he was writing for Gilbert Fitzbaderon; see Rosalind Wadsworth, Historical Romance in England: Studies in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Romance, unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 1972, pp.149-51, also Rosalind Field (Wadsworth), 'The Anglo-Norman Background to Alliterative Romance', in Middle English Alliterative Poetry and Its Literary Background, ed. David A. Lawton, Woodbridge 1982, esp. p.56. The most recent edition of Ipomédon is by A.J. Holden, Paris 1979. The three M.E. versions of the romance are edited by Eugen Kölbing, Hue de Rotelande's Ipomédon in drei englischen Bearbeitung, Breslau 1889. Ipomédon as a hero was evidently well known, to judge from the citation in Richard Coeur de Lion, ll.6725-26; and cf. Chaucer's Anelida and Arcite, ll.57ff. All quotations from Chaucer in this article are taken from the edition of The Works by F.N. Robinson, London 1966[2].

3. On the date see Manual, 1, 153-4 and on the nature of the 'B' adaptation see, e.g., Dieter Mehl, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, London 1968, pp.58-68; Derek Pearsall, 'The Development of Middle English Romance', Medieval Studies 27, 1965, 91-116, (104), and 'The English Romance in the Fifteenth Century', Essays and Studies, 1976, pp.56-83, (63-4); Wadsworth, pp.279-81.

4. Pearsall, 'The English Romance', 74.

5. On the early prose romances in English see Pearsall, 'The English Romance', 71ff., and on the development of prose in general, H.J. Chaytor, From Script to Print, Cambridge 1945, Chap.V. It should be remembered, of course, that the English nobility had been reading, and continued to read, prose romances in French.

6. The consensus of opinion places the composition of Ipomadon A in the late fourteenth century (see Kölbing, p.clxxiii, and Manual 1, 153-4) although Victoria Ann Baum Bjorklund suggests 1350-75 in The Art of Translation in Ipomadon: from Anglo-Norman to Middle English, unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Yale University, 1977, p.14. On the literary quality of this version and the nature of the adaptation, see Bjorklund; Wadsworth, pp.257-78; Mehl, pp.58-68; Pearsall, 'The Development of Middle English Romance', p.114; A.C. Baugh, 'The Middle English Romance: Some Questions of Creation, Presentation and Preservation', Speculum 42, 1967, 1-31, p.6; A.V.C. Schmidt and Nicolas Jacobs, eds. Medieval English Romances, Part 2, London 1980, pp.40-49.

7. In the present discussion when all versions of the romance are under consideration the spelling 'Ipomedon' will be used; when comments relate to one version specifically, the following will be adopted, in line with MS spellings: 'Ipomédon' = the A-N romance; 'Ipomadon' = A text; 'Ipomydon' = B text; 'Ipomedon' = C text.

8. A full analysis of the structure of the MS will be found below. There are at least nine stocks of paper represented in the MS, some of which are distinguished by watermarks. Stock (a) is a sun with a face inside it; (b) is a bull's head surmounted by a star on a stalk; (c) is the crowned arms of France with pendant 't' or 'f'; (d) a crown surmounted by a linear cross with single-lobed leaves at its apexes; (e) the arms of Orléans surmounted by a double cross; (f) a unicorn; (g) a diamond-shaped bunch of grapes with pendant crescent, surmounted by an oblong plaque bearing the initials 'E.C.'; (h) a ring with an equal-armed cross as its 'jewel'; (i) a bull's head surmounted by a St Andrew's cross on a stalk. It is possible that there are two additional stocks represented; there is no mark on the first two leaves nor on ff.368, 369. Tentative identifications of some of these stocks, based on the evidence of the watermarks assembled by C.M. Briquet in Les Filigranes (Jubilee edition, with intro. by Allan H. Stevenson, Amsterdam 1968) are as follows: (b) see Briquet 14908, Gênes 1498-1500; 14906, Palermo 1476, var. sim., Gênes 1475-84; (c) 1741, Troyes 1470; (d) 4645, 4646, Lyons 1459-69, Azeglio 1473; (e) 1557, Chartres 1476, with var. ident. 1476-c.1490; (f) 10178, Châteaudun 1474; (h) 694, Palermo 1479; (i) 14239, Namur 1478, with var.ident. 1478-83. There are no close correspondences for watermarks (a) or (g) in Briquet, although, with reference to the latter mark, raisins with pendant designs, as in the Chetham example, seem to date from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

9. See Carol M. Meale, 'The Compiler at Work: John Colyns and B.L. MS Harley 2252', n.4, in Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth Century England, ed. Derek Pearsall, Woodbridge 1983.

10. See, respectively, Pamela Tudor-Craig, catalogue to the National Portrait Gallery exhibition on Richard III (June to October 1973) no. 154, p.63; and John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, The Text of the Canterbury Tales Vol.I, Chicago and London 1940, 339; cf. Gisela Guddat-Figge, Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Middle English Romances, Munich 1976, pp.238-40.

11. The hand of the first scribe is more elaborate than that of the second; the former embellishes the initial letters of many pages with strap-work flourishes (in the same pen and ink as the text) of varying complexity; occasionally cadels (grotesque faces) are found in the midst of the pen-strokes, as on f.6r. Running titles appear throughout, although it is not possible to be certain whether or not these are in the hand of either of the scribes who copied the texts; strap-work flourishes also decorate many of these (see Pl.3).

12. On these respective points see Meale, 'The Compiler at Work', and 'Wynkyn de Worde's Setting-Copy for Ipomydon', Studies in Bibliography, 35, 1982, 156-71.

13. This may account for the increasing use of prose as a medium for romance composition only after the publication of Caxton's Burgundian-inspired translations; cf. Pearsall, 'The English Romance in the Fifteenth Century', 72, and Diane Bornstein, 'William Caxton's Chivalric Romances and the Burgundian Renaissance in England', English Studies, 57, 1976, 1-10, although the assumptions made in the latter article regarding the patronage undertaken by members of the Yorkist royal family should be treated with caution.

14. Details of Colyns's life and interests described in the following paragraph are more fully documented, unless otherwise stated, in the articles cited in notes 9 and 12 above.

15. See the record of the court, held on 18 June 1516, in Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company 1453-1527, ed. with introduction by L. Lyell, assisted by F.D. Watney, Cambridge 1936.

16. The northern midlands, perhaps on the borders of the western area was suggested by Kölbing (pp.ix-xi) and this is followed in Manual 1, 155, Bjorklund, p.14. A. McIntyre Trounce in his articles on 'The English Tail-Rhyme Romance', Medium Aevum 1-3 (1932-34), 87ff., 168ff.; 34ff., 189ff.; 30ff., suggests the East Midlands, as does Guddat-Figge (with some hesitation), p.238. The matter remains to be resolved.

17. This item has not been identified specifically as a set of Annals in previous MS descriptions, where it has been listed simply under its opening line: 'The namys of Wardeyns and Balyffys in the tym of kynge Rychard the ffrest ...'. For discussions of the origins and variations of London chronicles of this type see C.L. Kingsford, intro. to his edition of Chronicles of London, Oxford 1905, and English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century, Oxford 1913, Chap. IV; A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley, eds., The Great Chronicle of London, London 1938; Antonia Gransden, Historical Writing in England, vol.ii, c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century, London 1982, Chap.8, esp. pp.227-48.

18. See the illustration and the discussion of the process of copying in Meale, 'The Compiler at Work'. Colyns's contemporary, the grocer Richard Hill, copied a set into his commonplace book, now Balliol MS 354; these are printed by Roman Dyboski in his edition of Songs, Carols and Other Miscellaneous Poems EETS ES 101, 1908, Appendix pp.142-67.

19. Typical items found in these compilations are records of weather which affected harvest, and hence the prices of perishable commodities; fires and other 'natural' disasters in the City; and observations on political events; in the case of Richard Hill (note 18 above) the entries made in the latter years of his own lifetime are particularly full, and he seems to have known many of the officials about whom he was writing.

20. The only specific clues as to ownership are the ?signature of 'Elysabet' on f.334v of Ipomadon, which could date from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century; and a note on a flyleaf at the beginning of the volume recording that a Roger Harwood (or Hanwood?) found the book amongst his father's on 20 January 159(?5); attempts to trace a man of this name have not been successful.

21. The motto, together with a drawing of Richard's boar badge, also occurs on f.5 of B.L. Additional 40742, a volume containing an

assortment of heraldic devices, etc. cut from various sources and pasted onto new sheets; see the illustrations in Tudor-Craig, pl.46, and in Charles Ross, Richard III, London 1981, Pl.18.

22. See note 11 above for observations on the different styles of the two scribes. Gatherings in both sections of the MS are in eights and signatures survive in a majority of these; in the first the quiring runs from a - o, in the second from b (the whole of the first quire is lost) - n. In the first section there are 10 leaves lost: ff.49-52 (g i - g iv); 28 (d iv); 68 (i.iv); 81-82 and 87-88 (l i - ii and vii - viii); and 101, 106 (n v and o ii), the latter being the final leaf of Ipomedon. If quire 'o' was the usual one of 8 leaves or 4 bifolia then f.111 and 112 are also lost. No contemporary signatures remain in this last gathering but a modern hand has numbered 107 as 'o iii'; during re-binding in the nineteenth century f.108 became displaced and was subsequently bound as a flyleaf before the first text, and numbered f.ir; this leaf was later marked, in the same modern hand as has already been observed, as 'o iv', and ff.109 and 110, following 107, are marked as 'o v' and 'o vi'. In Part 2, in addition to the first quire there are 8-10 leaves missing: e iii - vi; f i, iv - v; k vi (and possibly vii and viii also, if this gathering was a normal one of 8 and not 6 leaves; that it was a short one is suggested by Manly and Rickert, p.339, following Henry Bradshaw, whose notes on the collation of the MS are now kept with it).

23. C.F. Brown and R.H. Robbins, eds., Index of Middle English Verse, New York 1943, p.944; see also Severs, ed., A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 2, New Haven, Connecticut 1970, 382, 535-36. The text is edited in 4 volumes; see Vol.I by H. Kalén, A Middle English Metrical Paraphrase of the Old Testament, Göteborgs Hogskolas Årsskrift, 28, Göteborg 1923, and vols.2, 3, 4 by Urban Ohlander, Gothenberg Studies in English, 5, 11, 16, Stockholm and Gothenburg 1955, 1960, 1963; see also the glossary by Ohlander, Stockholm 1972.

24. The Rules of Conduct are of some interest to both social and literary history, and are transcribed in the Appendix to this article; they are discussed in more detail below. In the Elizabethan period someone copied out the second half of these instructions onto f.110r in a neat secretary script; on the verso of this leaf, above an apparently erased item is the name 'mowartin williams' and the date 1597.

25. The implication to be drawn from Pamela Tudor-Craig's discussion of the MS, where she places it in the first half of the century, is that texts and embellishment were coterminous (p.63). Margaret Rickert, on the other hand, in her chapter on the illumination of MSS of the Canterbury Tales in Manly and Rickert, comments (pp.580-81) with specific reference to Longleat, on the 'pitiable state into which English work had fallen' and relegates the style of the decoration to 'the very end' of the century without, however, substantiating this conclusion.

26. There are two exceptional instances in the decorative scheme as a whole and both occur in Part 2 of the MS. The first of these, on the opening page of the 'liber deutronomy' (f.125r) is a lombardic style letter 'M' set within an irregular rectangle and coloured in pink and blue; the second is in the opening page of the fourth book of Numbers (f.176r) where a unique animal motif occurs: the letter 'I' is formed by a dragon. The colours in this latter instance are, however, similar to those used in the decorated initials elsewhere in the MS and the design is likely to have been contemporary with these, even if it is not necessarily the work of the same artist.

27. The terminology used here is that established by Lucia M. Valentine, Ornament in Medieval MSS: A Glossary, London 1965.

28. See Kathleen L. Scott, 'A Mid-Fifteenth Century Illuminating Shop and Its Customers', Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 31, 1968, 173.

29. I am most grateful to Dr Scott for her remarks to me in correspondence concerning the decoration of Longleat. She draws attention to a similar example of a decorated 'S' in Bodleian MS Fairfax 4, a copy of Roger of Waltham's Compendium Morale, which has been dated to the third quarter of the fifteenth century, although this is a more polished piece of work than any in Longleat; see the illustration in O. Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, Illuminated MSS in the Bodleian Library, III, Oxford 1973 Pl.CIV, no.1098.

30. Manly and Rickert, p.341; they cite Cal.Inq.p.M. Henry VII, I, 35.

31. Manly and Rickert do mention the town of Hempton in Oxfordshire, but comment that 'there seems to be no place of interest' in the vicinity. Guddat-Figge, whilst apparently accepting the attribution of the MS to Norfolk, is rightly sceptical about the tenuousness

of the argument that, since the Austin canons were known as makers of books, the volume in all probability originated there; (p.237).

32. The dialect of Ipomedon has been described as 'mixed' and 'undetermined' (so the Manual 1, 154, following Kölbing); Mr Jeremy Smith informs me that the mixed character of the dialect of the MS as a whole has precluded it from consideration in the M.E. Dialect Survey. He supplements Mabel Dean's analysis of the language of the Chaucer texts (in Manly and Rickert, pp.340, 552) stating that there is an admixture of northern, southern, and one or two western features here; he adds that there do not appear to be any characteristics of Norfolk dialect (although it is of course possible that a scribe could have moved there from outside the district). It has been suggested in regard to Part 2 of the MS that the scribe has consciously adapted the language of his northern exemplar to meet the requirements of a more southerly (midland) audience; see Kalén, ed., A M.E. Metrical Paraphrase of the Old Testament, pp.xxv, xxxiv, clxvi, clxx.

33. Manly and Rickert, p.341.

34. See Ross, Richard III, passim, for reference to the uneasy relationship between Gloucester and the Wydvilles. After February 1478 Richard appears to have become increasingly estranged from the court, spending little time there; see Ross, pp.34-35.

35. On Edward and Hastings see Margaret Kekewich, 'Edward IV, William Caxton, and Literary Patronage in Yorkist England', Modern Language Review, 56, 1971, 481-87; J.J.G. Alexander, 'Painting and Manuscript Illumination for Royal Patrons in the Later Middle Ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne, London 1983, pp.152-3, 161; further on Hastings see Kathleen L. Scott, The Caxton Master and His Patrons, Cambridge Bibliographical Society Monograph no.8, Cambridge 1976, pp.52-53. Anthony Wydville patronised Caxton's press for publication of his translations of the Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers (1477); the Proverbs of Christine de Pisan (1478) and the Cordyale (1479); see DNB for some account of his contemporary reputation as an author.

36. An interesting fact to note is that on the flight from England in October 1470, Richard and Wydville were on the same ship; they came ashore in Zeeland, some way to the south of where Edward and Hastings had landed (see Ross, Richard III, p.19). The

circumstances of flight from a common enemy may be thought to have been propitious for better relations between them, even if they were to deteriorate in later years.

37. There are spaces left in several of the initials in both parts of the MS for the arms of an owner to be added (e.g. ff.1r, 2r, 12r, 135r, 136r, 195r, 201v, 209r); the majority of these are blank but one or two seem to have been deliberately erased (e.g. those on 12r, 135r). The fact that most of the initials are void strengthens the case for assuming the texts and embellishment to have been executed at the same time and raises the possibility that the MS was produced on a speculative basis; at any rate it is difficult to see why, if the void shields were included as an integral part of the decorative scheme after a patron or buyer had taken possession of the two parts of the volume, the painting of the arms was not completed in the same workshop. On the other hand, if the two 'books' were produced on a speculative commercial basis, with shields deliberately left blank until a purchaser had been found, the possibility that the new owner neglected to have them filled in is more understandable. On the problems raised by 'void' initials of this sort see A.I. Doyle and M.B. Parkes, 'The production of copies of the Canterbury Tales and the Confessio Amantis in the early fifteenth century', in Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries, Essays presented to N.R. Ker, ed. M.B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson, London 1978, pp.163-210, Appendix C. Dr Tudor-Craig, however, claims that in two of the initials the underdrawings of barry arms can be seen and in support of Manly and Rickert's contention concerning Wydville's ownership of the MS she observes that these arms 'could be associated with the arms of (Wydville's) nephew, Sir Thomas Grey Lord Ferrers' (p.63). Although Grey did indeed bear barry arms - barry of six or and azure, in chief three torteaux - the underdrawings in Longleat cannot provide a conclusive identification of an owner: a glance through books of contemporary blasoning reveals a number of coats of arms which have as a base, barry of six; see, e.g. Two Tudor Books of Arms, etc., Blasoned by Joseph Foster (The De Walden Library, 1904), passim, and Joan Corder records no less than 16 variations on barry of six in her work on the arms of Suffolk families, A Dictionary of Suffolk Arms, S.R.S. Vol.VII, Ipswich 1965. It may be added that the relationship between Richard of Gloucester and Grey was even more fraught than that between Gloucester and Wydville, which might pose difficulties in working out how the MS passed between them; see Ross, Richard III, esp. pp.68ff., 109, 136-38.

38. See F.J. Mather, ed., King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, PMLA 12, 1897, ii-lxvii, 1-150, pp.xxiv-xxv; this romance is discussed further below. Fragments of another copy of Ponthus survive, namely, 2 leaves in Bodleian MS Douce 384; this MS was of paper and, in Guddat-Figge's words, was 'evidently modest', unlike the Digby volume (Guddat-Figge, p.269).

39. See George Keiser, 'Lincoln Cathedral Library MS 91: Life and Milieu of the Scribe', and 'More Light on the Life and Milieu of Robert Thornton', in Studies in Bibliography, 32, 1979, 158-79 and 36, 1983, 111-119, respectively.

40. On the date of the copying of the M.E. alliterative Alexander, and of its accompanying illustrations, see A.I. Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', p.93, in Middle English Alliterative Poetry and 'English Books In and Out of Court from Edward III to Henry VII, in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, p.167. Richard Wydville's inscription of ownership is printed in full in P. Meyer, 'Etude sur les manuscrits du roman d'Alexandre', Romania 11, 1882, 213-332, p.291. Underneath this inscription is the scrawled ?signature 'Ryverys' but it is not clear by whom this was added; M. R. James in his introduction to the collotype facsimile of the MS, Oxford 1933, suggested that it could be the hand of the 3rd Earl, Anthony's brother.

41. Stafford County Record Office D641/1/3/9; see the reference to this document in Carole Rawcliffe, The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham 1394-1521, Cambridge 1978, p.95, n.33.

42. The prose romances were issued c.1510, 1518 and c.1515 respectively; see A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland ... 1475-1610, 2nd ed. revised W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson and Katharine F. Pantzer, Vol.2, London 1976. On Henry Watson, who translated the first two, see N.F. Blake, 'Wynkyn de Worde: The Later Years', Gutenberg-Jahrbuch 1972, p.130; Buckingham was actually the patron of Robert Copland's prose translation of Helyas, Knight of the Swan, published by de Worde in 1512.

43. Due allowance must always be made for there being exceptions to this rule; see, e.g., Buckingham's ownership of inexpensive editions from de Worde's press, above; and, in respect of MSS, the ownership of Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 67, Gower's Confessio Amantis, by one Thomas Crisp, mercer of London; see Doyle and Parkes, p.209 and n.126.

44. The colours used in Longleat are maroon, pink, scarlet, blue, green and ochre (with white for highlighting of details); on the widespread use of this range of colours in MSS of this date see Kathleen L. Scott, introduction to The Mirroure of the Worlde, Bodley 283 (England c.1470-1480), Oxford, for the Roxburghe Club, 1980, p.38.

45. I am indebted to Dr Scott for this observation.

46. Cf. n.11 above.

47. It is worth noting that the use of strapwork embellishment serves to raise the overall standard of the decoration in the MS, even though it is not always carried out with flair (compare Pls.4, 6-8 and see n.59 below); strapwork tends to be found in rather more expensively produced MSS than Chetham, as in Longleat 257, for example, also Digby 185 containing King Ponthus, and cf. the very fine example in Rawlinson Poetry 32, f.57r, the opening page of a copy of the Brut. The technique may well have originated on the continent: there are many examples in French and Burgundian MSS from the beginning of the fifteenth century onwards; among those contemporary with Chetham are MSS executed for Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy and her step-daughter, Mary (see Otto Pächt, The Master of Mary of Burgundy, London 1948, p.33 and n.26); and a MS of La Penitence Adam, dedicated to Louis de Gruthuyse and produced in the workshop of Colard Mansion in Bruges, c.1475-85 (see Pl. facing p.76 of the Catalogue of The Bute Collection of 42 Illuminated Manuscripts and Miniatures, Sotheby's, 13 June 1983). The adoption of such calligraphic detail by the producers of Chetham might imply a degree of pretension which is hardly justified by the quality of the work as a whole. It would, of course, have been a less expensive form of decoration to supply than any involving the use of paint.

48. On the question of performance see Baugh, 18-28, esp. 25; Mehl, pp.58-68, discusses the narrative changes in B.

49. Bjorklund, p.22 and cf. p.107; the other critics mentioned in n.6 above would not seem to agree with her assessment of the intended audience - a 'provincial' one, of 'limited literary sophistication'.

50. This is one of the criteria cited by Derek Pearsall as evidence of the changeover from a listening to a reading audience; see 'The English Romance in the Fifteenth Century', 61.

51. M.B. Parkes, 'The Literacy of the Laity', in Literature and Western Civilisation: The Medieval World, ed. David Daiches and Anthony Thorlby, London 1973, pp.555-77.

52. Pamela de Wit, The Visual Experience of Fifteenth Century English Readers, unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford 1977.

53. It may be noted that the layout of Ipomedon C is more helpful as regards the demands of both oral delivery and silent reading than that of either the A or B texts, due to the distinguishing of sentences with different coloured inks, which would allow the eye to adjust quickly to the sense. Edward IV's regulations of 1474 concerning the education of the Prince of Wales state that the child's midday meal was to be accompanied by the reading aloud of 'such noble stories as behoveth a Prince to understand ...' (A Collection of the Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household, (Society of Antiquaries 1790) 27-28, quoted by Charles Ross, Edward IV, London 1974, p.8.) The matter of reading aloud at court is considered by R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers, Toronto and London 1980, pp.99-100. The practice seems to have continued for some time; Lord Berners' 'Translatour's Prologue' to his Arthur of Little Britain (written c.1514, pub. ?1555) begins: 'For as moche as it is delectable to all humayne nature to rede and to here these auncient noble hystoryes of the chyualrous feates and marcyall prowesses of the victoryous knyghtes of tymes paste ...'; see the edition by E.V. Utterson, London 1814.

54. For discussions of this story and some examples of its application see Pamela R. Robinson, A Study of Some Aspects of the Transmission of English Verse Texts in Late Medieval Manuscripts, unpublished B.Litt. thesis, St Hugh's College, Oxford, 1972; and Pamela Robinson and Frances McSparran, introduction to the facsimile of C.U.L. MS Ff.2.38, London 1979.

55. On booklets see Pamela Robinson, 'The "Booklet": a Self-Contained Unit in Composite Manuscripts', Codicologica, 3, 1980, 46-69.

56. This analysis differs in many respects from that of Guddat-Figge, pp.238-40; partly for this reason, but primarily because the argument put forward in this paper is dependent on an understanding of the physical nature of the volume, the construction is described in some detail (further information on paper-stocks will be found

in n.8 above). Titles in inverted commas are taken from incipits or explicits in the MS, underlining indicates a modern, editorial title, supplied where the MS is deficient.

57. Russell's text is copied into one gathering of 18 leaves plus 1 singleton; from the increasingly cramped layout of this item it seems that the scribe originally planned to copy it into one quire, but miscalculated, and had to include an extra leaf. It is possible that the otherwise blank title-page to this text (f.336) forms part of the same sheet as this last leaf; it bears the same watermark as the rest of the quire so must have been added at the same time. The first page of the text proper, f.337r, is slightly grimier than f.336 - the former could have become rubbed while lying unprotected in the shop, or while the scribe was in the process of copying the rest of the quire; the present binding is too tight to allow of a positive conclusion on this point. Catchwords in the rest of the MS survive on the following pages: 41v ('seynt katerin'); 55v, 66v ('liber Catonis'); 105v ('Torrent'); 134v, 148v, 162v, 176v ('Bevis'); 204v, 218v, 232v, 245v, 257v, 271v, 283v, 297v, 311v, 325v ('Ipomadon'). There appears to be a lacuna between ff.358 and 359 of the MS, in the Book of the Duke and the Emperor.

58. It is on occasions difficult to be sure which parts of the MS this scribe did copy; there is some similarity between the hands of the romances, for instance, and that of John Russell's 'boke' (see Pls.4, 7); but on balance the greater angularity and awkwardness of the latter, combined with a greater consistency in the distribution of anglicana and secretary forms of letters suggests that Russell's treatise is the work of another scribe. In Torrent there are a number of similarities between what are here assumed to be two different hands (VII, V; compare Pls.6, 4) but the first writes in a more consistent anglicana and is markedly untidier (see, e.g. the messily-made corrections and the unevenness of copying on ff.81v, 82r); scribe V seems to have taken over copying around l.7 or 8 on f.94r, although there appears to have been some attempt to 'blend' the two hands initially (but there are abrupt changes in certain letter-forms, e.g. 'T' from this point onwards).

59. On the calligraphic features displayed in these headings see n.47 above. The same hand seems to have been responsible for the incipits and explicits to 'seynt katerin' and Bevis, the incipit to 'kervying and nortur' and possibly also for the incipit of Ipomadon, although there are some differences to be observed here; this hand

shows a stiffness and lack of fluidity when compared with that of the heading to Torrent, which reveals a greater skill and assurance (see Pls.7, 4, 6, respectively). The hand which embellished 'seynt Anne' does not appear to have contributed to the decoration of any of the other texts.

60. 'courtly' is taken in the present context to refer to the portrayal within a work of chivalric behavioural mores, rather than to the milieu in which the work may have been read.

61. See Mehl, pp.83-85; E. Adams, introduction to his edition of Torrent of Portyngale, EETS ES 51, 1887, xix-xxxiv.

62. Judith Weiss, 'The Major Interpolations in Sir Beues of Hamtoun', Medium Aevum, 48, 1979, 71-76; the suggestion is made in n.9 that the later texts (i.e. Chetham and Pynson's printed edition) of the romance 'emphasise Beues's Christian role even more'; cf. Mehl, pp.211-20.

63. The piety of the story in A is minimal and does little to affect the meaning of the work; see, e.g. ll.7959-63, 8041-47. By way of contrast, in C religion informs the story from the beginning (see, e.g. the opening of the romance where Meliager, a representative of worldly chivalry, is said to govern 'his roialme in rest and peace' because of the 'honour and grace god sent him') and throughout the romance the author is concerned to prove Ipomedon's worthiness within a secular Christian context - we are repeatedly told that his achievements are won through God's grace. In A, the emphasis on Ipomadon's role as a lover, primarily, is demonstrated in both the opening and closing lines; in ll.8876-84 the poet states that Ipomadon has sent him as his 'messyngere' 'To lovers, that leve in londe'.

64. The Chetham text of Russell is probably the latest, and also the most corrupt; the epilogue (as found in Furnivall's copy-text, Harley 4011) is severely curtailed and appears to have been edited in order to eliminate all reference to Duke Humphrey, although Russell's self-identification remains; the earlier statement in which the author explains his training in the past tense (ll.77-78) has been brought into the present tense: 'Wherfore good son I am with a prince Riall / vshere in chambere marchall in halle' (f.355r, ll.22-23) so that the courtly credentials are retained. The corruption of the text can be seen from Pl.7; in stanza 1 the 3rd line 'And owsser I Am as ye may se' is a paraphrase of the 1st part of

l.3 in Harley 4011: 'an vsshere y Am ye may beholde', and the fact that the substituted verb happens to coincide with the rhyme-words for the rest of the stanza has apparently caused the scribe to split the long line into two short ones; hence the last line of this stanza has been transposed to the beginning of stanza 2, producing a stanza of 5 lines.

65. In previous descriptions of the MS from that of J.O. Halliwell, in his Account of the European MSS in the Chetham Library, Manchester, Manchester and London 1842, p.16, to that of Guddat-Figge, p.239, the text has been called 'The manner of the feasts and visitations of the Emperor of Bourgoyne, addressed to the Lady Comynes', a quotation from the opening paragraph. The subject-matter of the piece suggests an almost certain identification with the work which John Paston III refers to in his letter of 25 July 1474 to his brother, John II, who was lodged 'at the George by Powlys Wharff in London'; John III writes:

> Also, syr, I prey yow that Pytt may trusse in a male whyche I lefft in your chambyr at London my tawny gowne furyd wyth blak and the doblet of porpyll sateyn and the doblet of blak sateyn, and my wryghtyng box of sypresse, and my book of the metyng of the Dwke and of the Emperour; and when all thys gere is trussyd in the male to delyuer it to the berer hereof to bryng me to Norwyche.
>
> Paston Letters, Vol.1, ed. Norman Davis, Oxford 1971, 592.

John Paston's book has not been identified before, to my knowledge, and I hope to write further on it, and the Chetham text, elsewhere. An account of the feast held for the Emperor by Charles on the evening of 7 October, entitled the Libellus de magnificentia ducis Burgundiae, was circulated in Latin, German and Dutch; see Richard Vaughan, Charles the Bold, London 1973, pp.145-47, but Professor Vaughan informs me in correspondence that he was not aware of there having been any contemporary English accounts (or translations) of the meeting between the two rulers.

66. See A.R. Myers, ed., The Household of Edward IV: The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478, Manchester 1959, pp.4-5, where the influence of Olivier de la Marche, one of Charles the Bold's most important court officials, on the composition of the rules in the Liber Niger, is noted; (cf. Ross, Edward IV, p.260); also, Richard Vaughan, Valois Burgundy, London 1975, p.184 and passim.

67. For a list of contents see Guddat-Figge, pp.188-94 (and for a discussion of their variety, Meale, 'The Compiler at Work'); the contents include an extract from Lydgate's Dietary; poems on the Duke of Buckingham, Ann Boleyn, Thomas Wolsey, and the battle of Flodden Field; one or two 'courtly' lyrics; the two romances, Ipomydon and the stanzaic Morte Arthur; Skelton's Speke, parott and Colyn Cloute; moral tags and a longer courtesy poem, The Proverbs of Good Counsell; chronicles; an Annals of London; copies of Acts of Parliament relating to the conduct of trade; a record of the 1534 session of the Reformation Parliament; medical recipes and other notes of practical interest; personal memoranda.

68. Longleat is apparently exceptional in preserving this combination of texts, though other MSS show Lydgate's more general debt in the Thebes to the framework of the CT: of the 23 MSS of the Thebes another 4 also contain excerpts from, or the whole of, the CT; see Manly and Rickert, pp.32, 71, 85, 145. On the specific debt of the Thebes to the Knight's Tale see Pearsall, John Lydgate, London 1970, p.55 and notes 11, 12.

69. On the sources of Ipomédon see Holden, pp.48-51; C.H. Carter, Ipomedon, an Illustration of Romance Origins, Haverford essays, Studies in Modern Literature, Haverford 1909; H.D.L. Ward, Catalogue of Romances in the Department of MSS in the British Museum, Vol.1, London 1883; Bjorklund; M.D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and Its Background, Oxford 1959, pp.87-88.

70. Cf. Thebes, ll.2603-607; in ll.8858-60 of Ipomadon A the poet acknowledges the fact that the audience will be familiar with Ipomadon's role in the story of Thebes; these lines derive from Hue's poem, ll.10539ff., and are not found in the B version; the last leaf of C is missing so we do not know whether they were included in this text.

71. See Elizabeth Salter, Chaucer: The Knight's Tale and Clerk's Tale, London 1962; see Anne Middleton, 'The Clerk and His Tale: Some Literary Contexts', in Studies in the Age of Chaucer, ed. Roy J. Pearcey, Vol.2, Oklahoma 1980, for a discussion of the various interpretations of the Griselda story in the fourteenth century.

72. See Manly and Rickert.

73. Compare, e.g., KT ll.3017-20; Cl.T ll.116-126, and the remarks directed at the Wife of Bath, ll.1164ff.

74. The tale opens with an assessment of Walter's rule and continues with the lesson on statecraft and marriage delivered to him by his unhappy subjects (ll.64-140); on Grisilde see esp. ll.428-41 (e.g. ll.428-31: 'Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh her wit/Koude al the feet of wyfly hoomlinesse,/But eek, whan that the cas required it,/The commune profit koude she redresse ...'); and also ll.393-413.

75. For views opposed to the one expressed here see David Aers, Chaucer, Langland and the Creative Imagination, London 1980, Chap.7; and Terry Jones, Chaucer's Knight: the portrait of a medieval mercenary, London 1980, but cf. the refutation of the latter's conclusions by Maurice Keen, 'Chaucer's Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages.

76. 'Medieval History, Moral Purpose and the Structure of Lydgate's Siege of Thebes', PMLA, 72, 1958, 463-74. For the author's exhortations to his readers to make 'mirrors' of various characters whose lives and deeds he explores see, e.g. ll.2623, 2723-25, 3038, and cf. Ayers, pp.467-68. Colophons and comments added to several of the MSS of the Thebes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries indicate that this view of the work was a common one; see Vol.II of the edition by A. Erdmann and E. Ekwall, EETS ES 125, 1930, 40-41.

77. Cf. Ayers, p.464 and n.7. One of the most succinct expositions of this view of history is found in John Skelton's translation of Diodorus Siculus (1488):

> Men ar hyghly bounde of a congruence vnto these wrytars of maters & histories, that by their laborius estudye haue pourcheced hye enprowmentes vnto the lyf of man. They manyfeste vnto theym that lyste to rede, by exemplifyenge of those that ben passed, what we ought to coveyte & desyre, and what we ought to auoyde & eschewe. For thoo thynges & fayttis that we rede by experimentis of many maters with many-folde labouris trauaylles & jeopardies, where-as we our-self be far fro the daunger, they gyue to vs specyal informaccion what best may helpe our lyf tendure ...
>
> ed. F.M. Salter and H.L.R. Edwards, EETS OS 233, 1956, p.5.

78. See Holden, pp.52-57; Legge, pp.85-95; Wadsworth, pp.81, 92. Schmidt and Jacobs, p.41, disagree with the idea that Hue writes cynically, referring instead to his 'realistic worldly wisdom'.

79. This is not to say that, in the time they were written, Hue's romances could not have been regarded as instructive; what differentiates the author of C from Hue is, rather, the view that he apparently has of himself, and his function as a writer, and his consequent adoption of a style which he presumably thought would be particularly appropriate in conveying his meaning to his audience.

80. The Brut, or the Chronicles of England, ed. Friedrich W.D. Brie, Pt.1, EETS OS 131, 1906, 1.

81. The effect of objectivity is, of course, illusory, since the author (in both instances) manipulates the audience into giving the desired response of approbation or condemnation through the inculcation of his own sense of values into the narrative.

82. There is a noticeable reduction in the use of romance 'clichés' (present in both A and B texts) to denote his worth (e.g. 'bold', 'mighty', 'doughty', 'strong'); there is a compensatory emphasis on the exclusive nature of the 'ordre of knighthood' to which the hero aspires: compare Malory's use of the same phrase.

83. The story of the hero's sojourn in France is omitted in B (see ll.1579 ff.); in A the episode is found in ll.5633ff. and the 'diplomatic' negotiations are described in ll.5939-6034 and, although Ipomadon is called 'Right wyse' (l.5966) greater emphasis is placed on his military skills and his attempts to avoid marrying the daughter of 'the Kyng Dayre'. The whole section in A is a fairly close reworking of ll.7229-7638 in the Anglo-Norman.

84. See, e.g., the opening of the book of Esther: 'Here may men loke who lykes to lere / of solace and of sorowyng also; / how þat þis werld wens euer in were / fro wo to wele, fro wele to wo ...' (ll.16453-58).

85. The beginnings of stanzas and individual lines are picked out by the use of red and blue inks, and internal rhymes are indicated throughout by red dots.

86. These books are now, respectively, MSS Royal 18.A.XII; Harley 49; Royal 20.C.VII; Egerton 2006; Lambeth 474; Sion College

London Arch 40 2/L26. For discussions of these see Tudor-Craig, pp.31, 66, 27, 26-27 (also 96-97), 65. Richard was appointed Constable of England on 17 October 1469 and one of the responsibilities of the office was charge of the heralds; Richard evidently took this duty seriously because he founded the College of Arms once he was monarch (2 March 1484); this interest is reflected in his ownership of two rolls of arms, now lost. See A.R. Wagner, Aspilogia, I, A Catalogue of English Medieval Rolls of Arms, Oxford, for the Society of Antiquaries, 1950, 20, 77; and Wagner Heralds of England, London 1967, pp.130-31.

87. For the possible source-relationship between Ipomédon and Le Bel Inconnu see the references cited in n.69 above.

88. For an exposition of these points see Schmidt and Jacobs, pp.44-49. Ipomedon differs from other romances in the extent to which the hero's attributes come to represent one of the principal themes of the work; that is, 'courtesy' in its various aspects informs the majority of incidents in the narrative. Comparisons have been carried out between Ipomedon and the following romances which describe the 'enfances' of a hero and his subsequent adventures: Libeaus Desconus; Perceval of Galles; Malory's Tale of Gareth; Sir Tristrem; Chevelere Assigne; the northern and southern versions of Octavian; Emaré; Sir Triamour; King Horn; King Ponthus; Havelok; William of Palerne; Sir Degaré; Generides. In all of these works the hero is forced to prove his nobility by his behaviour (whether to win his love, or to regain his alienated birthright), but in the majority of these it is military prowess alone which is apparently considered of importance; in Perceval, for instance, humorous play is made of the contrast between Perceval's valour and his lack of 'nurtour' (ll.1565-67). The closest analogues to Ipomedon in terms of the detailed descriptions of the hero's upbringing are to be found in two relatively late works, Ponthus (1400-c.1450) and Generides (the couplet version, ?late fourteenth century); see the editions of these by F.J. Mather, and F.J. Furnivall, A Royal Historie of the Excellent Knight Generides, Roxburghe Club, London, 1865.

89. See also the episode where Ipomadon is mocked by Meleager's courtiers over his apparent preference for hunting over activities which would prove his chivalric prowess; on this occasion it is a burgess who, alone, recognises Ipomadon's innate nobility and instructs the court on this (ll.5209-11, 5233-35).

90. The reference in ll.26-27 on f.109v of the Rules (see Appendix) to the instructions on the 'hother syd off the leffe' reinforces the impression of the informality of the piece and suggests that the writer was not working from an exemplar.

91. The essential 'literariness' of Russell's text is demonstrated by his use of the dream framework which, given the subject under discussion, appears rather incongruous. The evidence of middle-class ownership of the Chetham MS perhaps indicates that the treatise was not necessarily 'aimed at a courtly audience' as assumed by R.F. Green, p.82.

92. Tudor-Craig, p.64; Dr Tudor-Craig follows P.M. Kendall's assumption that Richard spent three years in Warwick's household from the age of 9 (see Kendall, Richard III, London 1955, pp. 45ff., 442); however, Ross, Richard III, pp.7-9, contradicts Kendall's idea that Richard was in Warwick's charge from 1461-64.

93. Pamela Tudor-Craig compares the Longleat Rules with a postscript to a letter written by Richard in June 1469, which is now f.19 in Cotton Vespasian F.iii. I have used this document, and also a letter, now in the P.R.O., of 12 October 1483 from Richard to Chancellor Bishop Russell, in which the King denounces the treachery of Buckingham; (see the illustration of this letter in Ross, Richard III, Pl.10b). There is a considerable change in Richard's hand over the years, as might be expected, but the proposition that the Longleat Rules were copied by him seems untenable. On the matter of dialect, I am grateful to Dr David Burnley for his invaluable comments in correspondence; while stressing that the evidence is scanty he writes that the dialect seems 'unremarkable', revealing no strong regional characteristics, but he adds that he would be 'very doubtful indeed that the letters and the Courtesy extract were written by the same man'. A final indication that the Rules are not in Richard's hand is the occurrence of some scribbled notes in the same hand apparently concerning the maintenance of an estate (the notes are fragmentary, but they mention the making of a 'new dyke') on what is now a flyleaf of the MS (f.i v); this would appear to be an unlikely domestic concern for someone in Richard's position.

94. See the discussion of this subject by Nicholas Orme, 'The Education of the Courtier', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, esp. pp.73-75, on the Pastons, and the references to education in the Liber Niger. Cf. R.F. Green, Chap.3.

95. It is of some note that the word 'courtesy' does not appear at all in the Longleat Ipomedon (see, e.g. the description of the hero's education, quoted above); instead the terms 'thrifty' and 'thriftieste' occur. There would seem to be resonances here of the moral qualities which should lie at the heart of 'courtly' behaviour; see the citations in the O.E.D. (the earliest dates from the 1370s) and note in particular Chaucer's use of the term.

96. The Proverbs of Good Counsell are edited by F.J. Furnivall in Queen Elizabethes Achademy, EETS ES 8, 1869, pp.68-70; Richard Hill made copies of 'the boke of curtasie', Stans puer ad mensam, 'lytill John', How the Wise Man Taught His Son, 'The ordre of goyng or sittyng' and the list of 'suche howshold stuff as must nedis be occupied at þe mayres fest yerely kepte at þe Yelde hall' (the first three texts are taken from printed editions issued by Caxton); see Dyboski, cat.nos. 46, 60, 64, 59, 92, 28, respectively.

97. See Ipomédon, ll.203-8; in A book-learning is omitted altogether, and in C Ipomedon is simply taught 'to rede'.

98. See also ll.525-28 and cf. the play on the adjective 'gentil' and the concept of the 'gentilman' throughout the text, e.g. in ll.280, 303-4, 1151, 1434, 1436, 2085, 2098.

99. See the editions of various texts by F.J. Furnivall in The Babees Book; also R.W. Chambers and Walter W. Seton, eds. A Fifteenth Century Courtesy Book and Two Fransiscan Rules, EETS OS 148, 1914. Wynkyn de Worde published editions of the Boke of Keruynge (based on Russell's text - see Furnivall, Babees Book, pp.cxi-cxii) in 1508, 1513. It is of note that the two romances which are here closest to Ipomedon in placing emphasis on aspects of courtesy, the couplet Generides and Ponthus (see n.88 above), each survive in MSS dating from c.1450 and were each printed three times, Generides by Pynson, and Ponthus by de Worde; see Manual 1, 303, 210-11. It may well be that this increasingly pronounced theme in later romances reflects specific interests on the part of audiences in this century; cf. Derek Pearsall's comments on the preoccupation with 'the external forms of chivalry' in the late fifteenth century text of Guy of Warwick which indicates similar areas of interest ('The English Romance in the Fifteenth Century', 62-63).

100. See, e.g., Parkes, 'The Literacy of the Laity', 562 (discussing Bodleian Selden supra 72); Diane Bornstein, Mirrors of Courtesy, Connecticut 1975, Chap. IV.

101. On the complex relations between the classes, and on the upward social mobility of the middle, and especially the mercantile, classes, see Sylvia L. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London, Ann Arbor 1962, Chaps. V and VI, esp. pp. 191-228 and Chap. VII, esp. pp. 300-310; and, by the same author, 'The Problem of Conservatism in Fifteenth Century England', Speculum, 18, 1943, 363-68, esp. 366, 367; also Myers, The Household of Edward IV, p.2; F.R.H. du Boulay, An Age of Ambition: English Society in the late Middle Ages, London 1970, Chap.4; K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England, Oxford 1973, pp. 14-15, 122-25.

102. This applies at any rate to works in Middle English; Green, p.82, suggests that such texts must have been commonly owned by members of the nobility, but produces little solid evidence (cf. n.91 above); courtesy books in Anglo-Norman, however, continued to be copied into the fifteenth century and it is possible that they read in this language rather than English; see H. Rosamund Parsons, 'Anglo-Norman Books of Courtesy and Nurture', PMLA, 44, 1929, 383-455.

103. See, e.g. Thrupp, 'The Problem of Conservatism', esp. p.367; Myers, The Household of Edward IV, pp. 2-3.

104. Du Boulay, p.61.

105. The printed editions of The Book of Good Manners were issued as follows: Caxton, 1487; Pynson, 1494, 1500; de Worde, 1498, 1507, 1526. On the text see B. Lindström, 'Some Remarks on Two English Translations of Jacques Legrand's Livre de Bonne Meurs', English Studies, 58, 1977, 304-11 and the short piece by the same author in The Library, 6th ser. 2, 1980, p.225.

106. For documentary reference see n.41 above.

107. Pace, Adams, p.xx; Mehl, pp.83-85.

108. I should like to thank Miss Jane Fowles, the Archivist, Longleat House; Miss A.C. Snape, the Librarian, Chetham's Library, Manchester; and Mrs. D. Randall and the staff of Staffordshire Record Office, for their assistance both in correspondence and during my visits to consult manuscripts and documents in their charge.

Appendix

Longleat 257, f.109 recto: Rules of Conduct for a Gentleman Usher

This transcription follows the suggested practice outlined by Malcolm Parkes in his English Cursive Book Hands 1250-1500, Oxford 1969, repr. with revisions 1979, pp.xxviii-xxx. Lineation throughout corresponds to that in the manuscript. The scribe's original punctuation and use of 'capital' letters has been retained and the distinction between 'u' and 'v' has been preserved, but 'i' and 'j' have been transcribed throughout according to modern usage. Contractions and abbreviations have been expanded as far as possible in line with the spellings used in general by the scribe; where it is not possible to determine the scribe's habits of spelling (as in with, which is nowhere written in full) the contracted form is retained. It is also often difficult to decide whether or not final flourishes are otiose; consequently they are recorded here individually by means of an apostrophe. [ ] enclose letters or words which have been deleted by the scribe. ( ) enclose letters or words supplied where the scribe has omitted them either by accident or on purpose, but has not used the appropriate mark of abbreviation. < > enclose letters which have been lost through cropping of the manuscript's pages. ⌜ ⌝ enclose words which have been omitted by the scribe and subsequently inserted by him above the line.

The order' how A Jentylman hvscher' schall' scerue hys
greet master' In' doyng' the sarwyse ffor the After' non'

fryst he schalle call' to hym' scartayn' yemen off schambyr'
And so he schall' go A ffore them' bare hedyd to these offesys
ffryst to the pantry And there he schehall' gewe the panter'
the say off the breed And take the breed And delyweryt
to A yeman' off the schambyr'

And than' he schall' go ffrom' thense to the botrey
And calle ffor' hys masters scerwysce wesche ys ffor' bere
And Alle And gewe the boteler' the says In' lyke wyse
And Than' delywer' to pots to Another' yeman'

And than' he schall' go to the sceller' And calle ffor' hys
prynsce [of] or' master' In' lyke wyse And than' the yeman'
off the sceller' schall' delywer' hym' hys greet masters
Cup And the cup off the say wt yt And than' the Jentylman
hwscher' schalle ouer cower' the cup And cawse the yeman'
of the sceller' ffor' to p(o)re the wyn' howt off the pot In'
to the cup And ⌜The⌝ Jentylman hwsscher' schalle put yt howt
off hys greet masters cup In' to the cup off the say

And there In' gewe yt to the yeman' off the sceller'
ffor' to take the say

And After' that put Alle the hother' wynys In' to the
cup off the say as After' An' hother' And gewe yt to the
yeman' off the sceler' but no more In' they greet master⟨s⟩
cup After' the ffry(s)t say be takyn'
And than' delywer' the⟦y⟧ poots off wyne to hewary yeman
⟦off⟧ And the Jentyll' man' hvscher' schall' take hys' mast⟨ers⟩
cup And And the cup off the say wt the bowllys And gooe
be ffore ouer to the cobard And there gewe says to the
yeman' In' lyke wyse Ase ys A ffore wreten'

f.109 verso

howe And In' wat maner' A Jentyllman' howsshar
schalle sarve hys greet master' or' mestres ther' lewery
ffor Alle nyt

ffryst thow schallt cum In' to the greet schambyr'
And calle ffor the groome porter And bed hym'
delywer A torsche to A yeman' off the schambyr'
And than' calle to the ase many yemen' off the
schambyr' ase schalle at that tym be nedffull'
fforto do they greet masters scarwyse
And ffryst cawse hym' that baryth the torsche
ffor' to goo beffore the to Alle the offysys

ffryst he schall' bryng' the to the Ewry
And off the yeman' off the Ewry thow schall'
take the cobard clothe And gewe hym' the say
off yt And delywer' yt to the yeman that berythe
the Torsche

And than' thowe schallt take off the sam' yeman'
off the Ewry the towell' And gewe hym
the say off yt And lay yt ouer they⌜lyft⌝ schoulder'
wyll that thow hast gewyn' hym' the say
off the water' And delywer' bothe the basyn'
And the towell' to A yeman' off the schambyr'

And than' goo ffrom' thensch to the pantry
And to the botry
And to the sceller'
And doo In' lyke wyse Ase ys wret(e)n on' the
hother' syd off the leffe
And than' calle to the⌜A⌝ groome porter' ffor
the sysys And ffor the lyyt that schall'
beryn' Alle nyt on the coberd'

PLATES

1. Harley 2252, folio 133 verso: last leaf of Le Morte Arthur with Colyns's inscription of ownership underneath; it reads: 'Thys Boke belongythe to John Colyns mercer /of london dwellyng in the parysshe of our lady / of wolchyrche hawe Anexid the Stockes in þe / þultre Yn anno domini 1517'. (Photograph by permission of the British Library.)

2. Longleat 257, folio 98 verso: the text of Ipomedon C with Richard of Gloucester's signature and motto. (Photograph by permission of the Marquess of Bath.)

3. Longleat 257, folio 90 recto: opening page of Ipomedon C. (Photograph by permission of the Marquess of Bath.)

4. Chetham Mun.A.6.31, folio 191 recto: opening page of Ipomadon A. (Photograph by permission of Chetham's Library.)

5. Harley 2252, folio 54 recto: opening page of Ipomydon B; the degree of wear on this page indicates that the romance circulated in booklet form before being bound up into a larger volume by John Colyns. (Photograph by permission of the British Library.)

6. Chetham Mun.A.6.31, folio 76 recto: opening page of Torrent of Portyngale; the strapwork embellishment of the incipit is the most elaborate to be found in the manuscript. (Photograph by permission of Chetham's Library.)

7. Chetham Mun.A.6.31, folio 337 recto: first page of the text of John Russell's 'courtesy' book; there is the quire signature 'a' in the bottom right-hand corner. (Photograph by permission of Chetham's Library.)

8. Chetham Mun.A.6.31, folio 357 recto: opening page of the Book of the Duke and the Emperor; note the scribe's calligraphic flourishes. (Photograph by permission of Chetham's Library.)

Plate 1

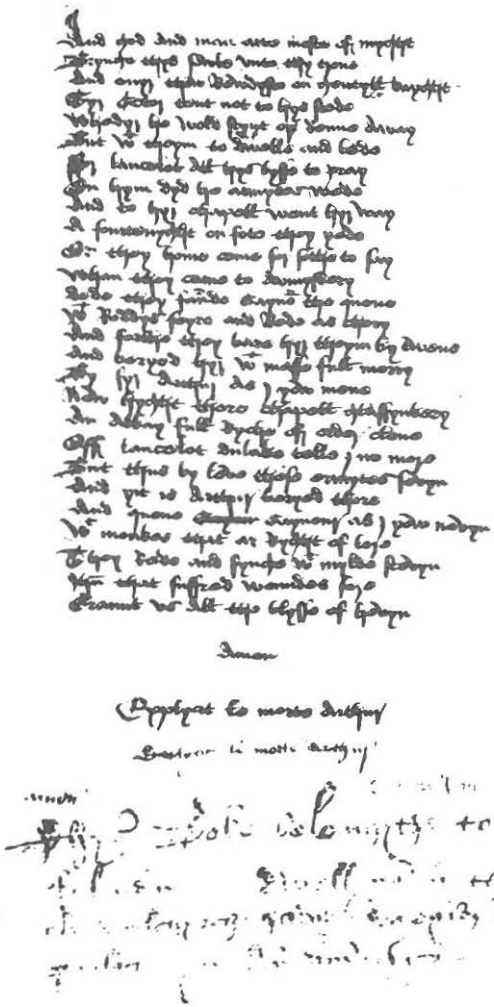
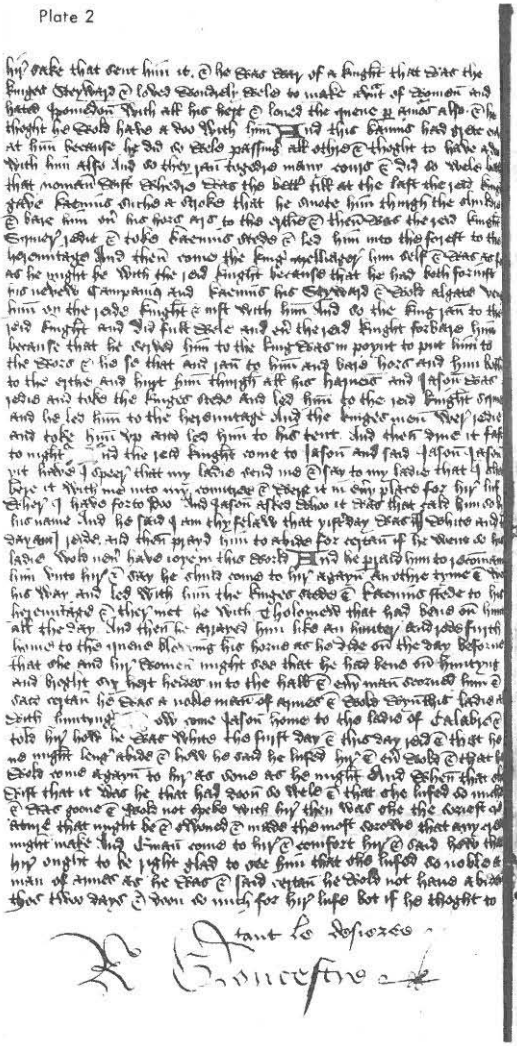


Plate 2



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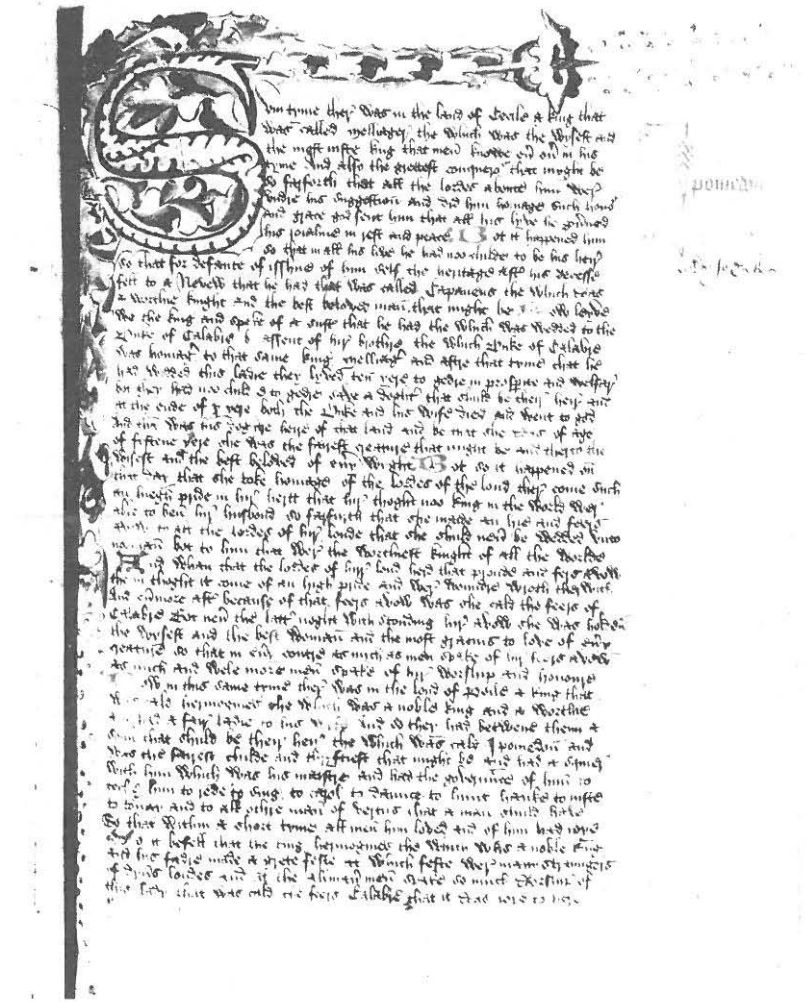


Plate 4

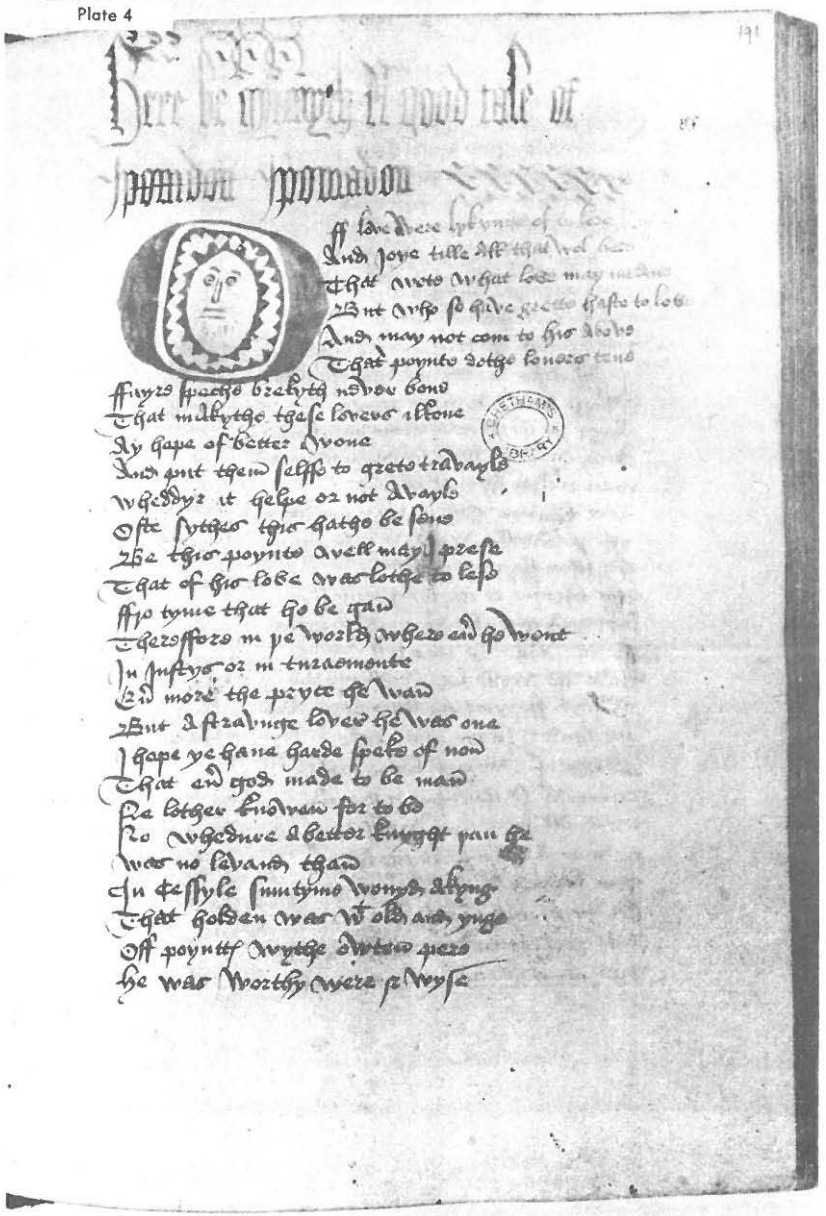


Plate 5

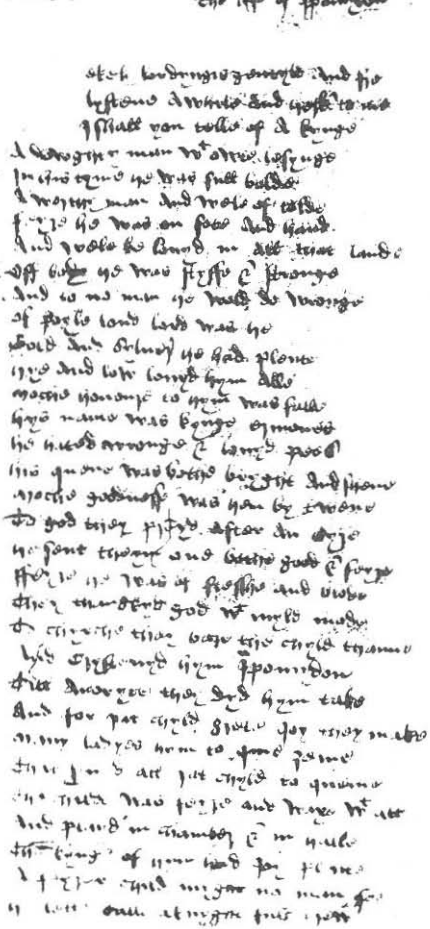


Plate 6

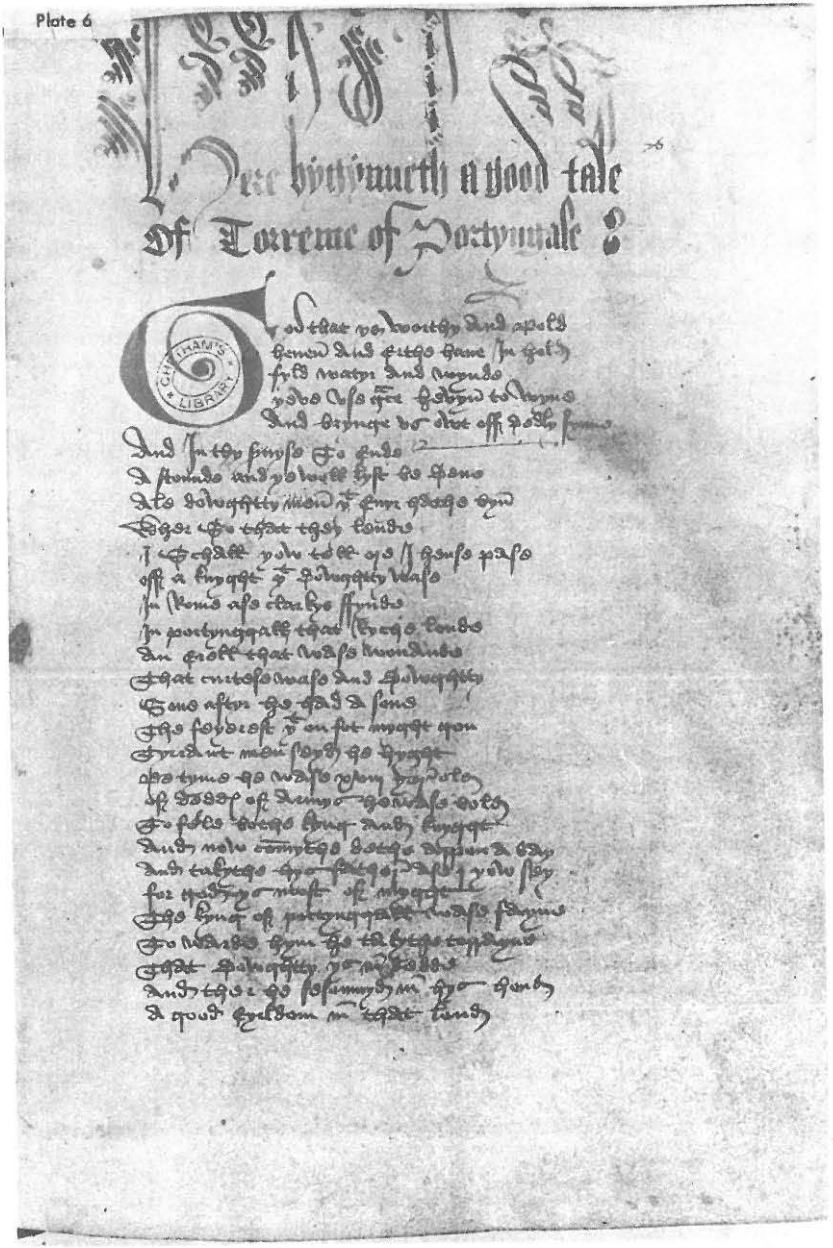
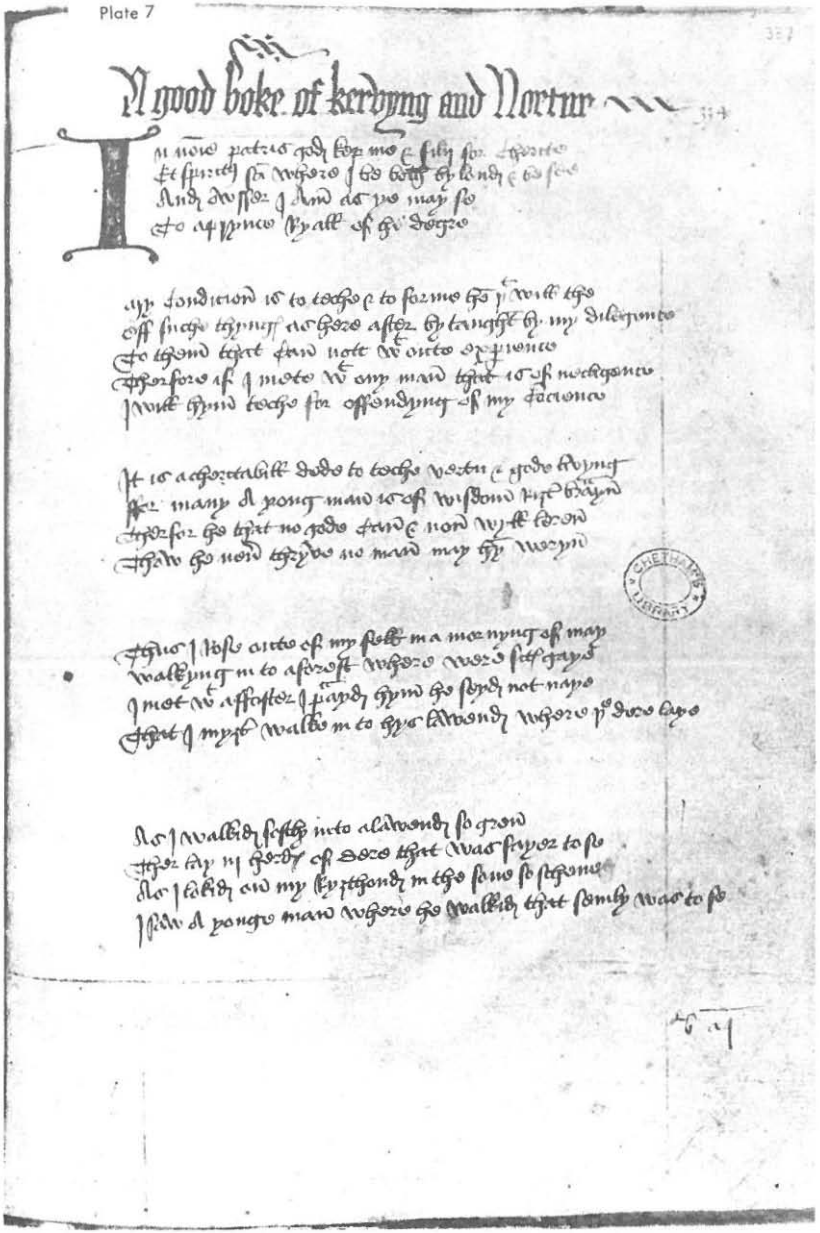

Here begynneth a good tale
Of Torrent of Portyngale
CHETHAM'S LIBRARY

Plate 7



A good boke of kervyng and Norture

In nomine patris &c. Here begynneth
the first chapitre of the book of kervyng
and of curtesye that a man ought
to use at the table

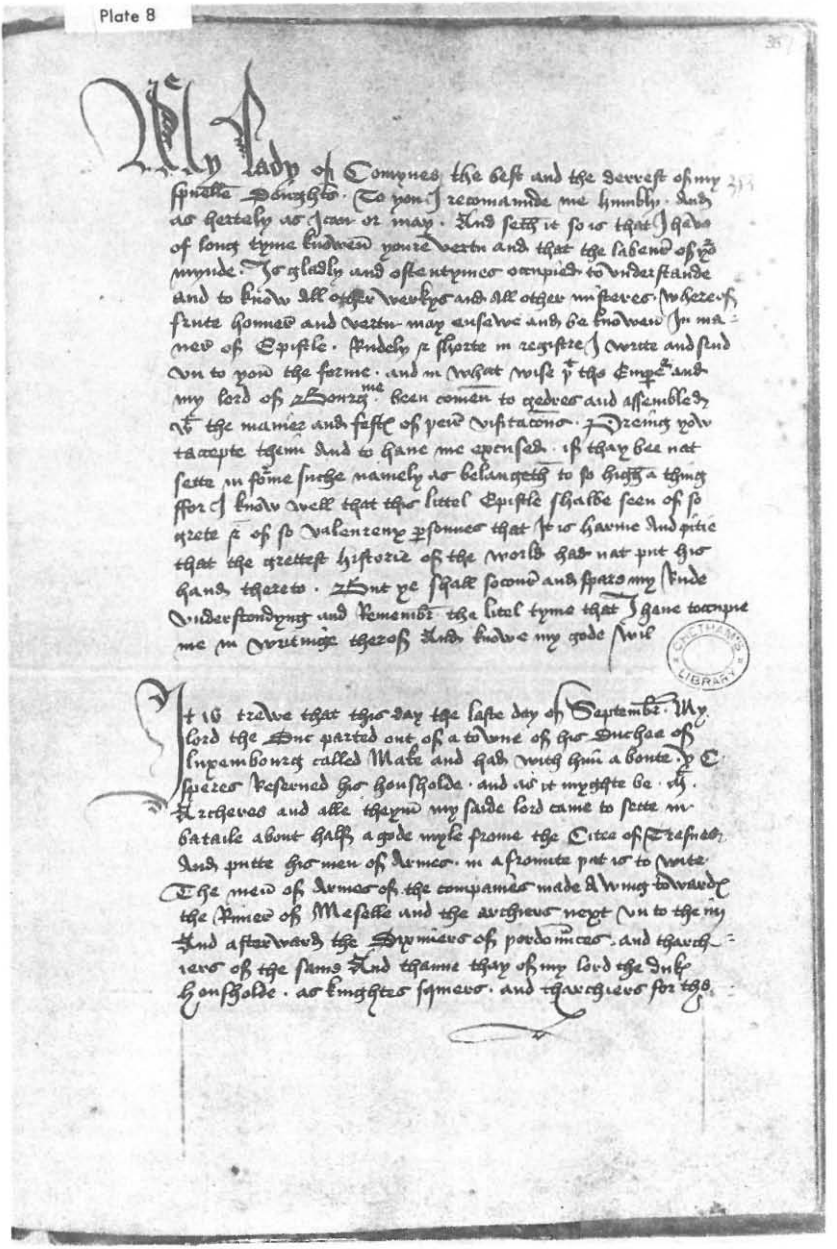
Myn condicion is to teche & to enforme the yonge men
of suche thynge as are good & honeste after the taught
by my diligence
to them that have not yet vsed curtesye
therfore yf I write vnto any maid that is vnlerned
I write hym teche for offendyng of my ignorance

It is a profitable dede to teche vertue & good doyng
for many a yonge man is full wysedom & vnderstandyng
therfore he that no good fynde now with forne
shall he nede thrydde no maid may thy wrong

Thus I lose all my fleshe in a morning of may
walkyng me to a forest where were swete grene
I myght not a stoppe I fayre hym the floure not naye
that I myght walke me to the hawthorn where the birde laye

Als I walkid forthe into a laundre so grene
there I my lordy of birdes that were fayre to se
Als I walkid and my entendyng me thought so strange
I sawe a yonge man where he walkid that semly was to se

Plate 8



My Lady of Comynes the best and the derrest of my
spirelle thoughts. To you I recommande me hymbly. And
as hertely as I can or may. And sette it so it tent I have
of long tyme endured youre wertu and that the laband of yo
mynde. To gladly and ofte entymes occupied to understande
and to knowe all other werkys and all other mysteres. Where of
frute homes and wertu may ensawe and be endued In ma-
ner of Epistle. Fynely & shorte in regyste I wrote and send
vn to you the forme. and in what wise ye the Emp^r and
my lord of Bourg^me been comen to gedres and assembled
to the manier and feste of yerd visitacon. I dremy you
taccepte tgem and to have me excused. if thay bee nat
sette in some suche namely as belongeth to so high a thing
for I knowe well that the litel Epistle shalbe seen of so
grete & of so valenteny ffomes that it is hawne and price
that the grettest historie of the world has nat put his
hand therto. Nat ye shall fownd and spare my fynde
understondyng and remembr the litel tyme that I have to-
me in wrytyng therof And knowe my gode wil

At 16 trelve that thes day the laste day of September. My
lord the Duc parted out of a towne of his Duchee of
Luxembourg called Mate and hath with him a bonte. y C
speres restorned his houshold. and as it myghte be. iij.
Archeves and alle thayne my sadde lord came to sette in
batayle about hath, a gode myle frome the Citee of Trefines.
And putte his men of Armes. in a fromte par is to write
The mod of Armes of the compaines made a wing towardes
the Pomes of Mesaike and the archeves next vn to the my
And afterward the Dymeues of pardomeres. and thavch-
ers of the same And thanne thay of my lord the Duk
Houshold. as knightes squeues. and thavcheues for thes